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ATHENIAN LETTERS:

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OR, THE

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

OF

AN AGENT OF THE KING OF PERSIA,
RESIDING AT ATHENS DURING THE PELOPONNESIAN
WAR.

A NEW EDITION;

TO WHICH IS ADDED A GEOGRAPHICAL
INDEX.

IN THREE VOLUMES,

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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EPISODIC CORRESPONDENCE

OF

AN ABSTRACT OF THE

RESIDING AT A LENS DURING THE PERIOD

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TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,
THE FOLLOWING WORK
IS INSCRIBED,
BY THE EDITOR;
AS A TESTIMONY OF HIS SINCERE RESPECT,
AND AS A MEMORIAL OF
THE GRATITUDE AND ATTACHMENT
ENTERTAINED BY THE AUTHORS OF IT
FOR THAT
ANCIENT AND VENERABLE SEAT OF LEARNING,
WITH WHICH THEY WERE
SO LONG AND SO HONORABLY CONNECTED.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE ATHENIAN LETTERS were first printed in the years 1741 and 1743, in Four Octavo Volumes, but were communicated only to a limited number of Friends, under the strictest injunctions of secrecy.

In 1781 they were reprinted in one Volume Quarto, but not published: yet, as the impression consisted of an hundred

copies, they became more generally known, and were mentioned in Maty's and the Monthly Reviews.

As they were now much sought after, and could not be purchased, they were published at Dublin, from a copy which had fallen into the hands of a Bookseller. The successful sale of this Edition in Ireland encouraged a London Bookseller to advertise proposals for a new one; but he immediately relinquished his design on being informed that the Work was private property, and had never been printed for publication.

The cause of its being so long suppressed was an ingenuous diffidence,

which forbid the Authors of it, most of them extremely young, to obtrude on the notice of the World, what they had considered merely as a preparatory trial of their strength, and as the best method of imprinting on their own minds some of the immediate subjects of their academical studies. This cause no longer subsists; and, in consequence of repeated applications, the Work is now offered to the Public, illustrated with a Geographical Index.

The analogy between the plan of the **ATHENIAN LETTERS** and the **TRAVELS OF ANACHARSIS the Younger**, induced the late Lord **DOVER** to transmit a copy of them to the Abbé **BARTHÉLEMI**, whom

he had known during his residence at Paris. The Letters which passed on that occasion are printed at the end of the Prefaces.

HARDWICKE.

Wm. 1798,
March 31st, 1798.

P R E F A C E

TO THE EDITION OF 1741.

AS the following Collection of Letters has been thought worthy the attention of the Learned by some judicious persons to whom they were communicated, the Translator humbly presumes they will prove an acceptable entertainment to the Public; at the same time he will be bold to say, they want no introduction to recommend them. However, as the world will naturally inquire into the circumstances to which it is indebted for these valuable remains of antiquity, he thinks it necessary to premise a general account of the accident which brought them to his hands. The account, he conceives, will not only be grateful to the curiosity of the Reader, but be attended with a further good consequence to himself, as it will sufficiently protect him from the cavils of censorious critics, and vindicate him from every unjust imputation.

It has long been a subject of complaint to modern Literati, that the Library at Fez in

the King of Morocco's dominions, where the greatest treasures of Oriental learning are supposed to lie, was never yet examined with any tolerable care or diligence. The difficulty of access to it is the reason why nothing certain can be known concerning it; but several have imagined, that, were it thoroughly searched, the Arabian versions of the Greek and Latin authors would in all probability see the light. A learned Jew, who dwelt in that city for many years, and who by some means or other had worked himself into the favor of the Alcaide, or chief magistrate of the place, spent much of his leisure hours in perusing the volumes that are lodged there. Upon his decease in the year 1698, he left his papers to an English Consul at Tunis, from whom he had received obligations in his lifetime. The Consul, upon turning them over, amongst others, found a fair Spanish manuscript, entitled "Letters from an Agent of the King of Persia, residing at Athens during the Peloponnesian War, to the Ministers of state, *etc.* translated by MOSES BEN MESHOBAB, from a Manuscript in the Old Persian Language, preserved in the Library at Fez." Surprised at what he saw, he wrote immediately to two

or three friends in England, and informed them of the important discovery. It appears that he had then an intention to publish them, but being afterwards called off by different pursuits, they lay neglected until his death. By the will of this gentleman, the manuscript was left as a legacy to the English Translator, who thought it would be an act of the highest injustice to with-hold them any longer from the public view. He chuses indeed to conceal his name, which he hopes the candid Reader will forgive, since it is not done with a design of imposing more safely upon the world, but in order to decline with honor the disagreeable wranglings of controversy.

The Agent concerned in these Letters appears to have been singularly fitted for his employment. As his mind was enlarged by a general conversation with men and books, his parts and knowledge furnished him with every qualification, required even by the most modern writers, on the subject of foreign negotiations. A circumstance the more extraordinary in CLEANDER, as he lived at a time when the balance of power was unequally divided in the world, and the science of embassy and treaty was not yet reduced into that regular and perfect system,

to which it has been carried by the wisdom of later and more improved ages. For the simplicity of the ancients in all their contests with their neighbours led them into the strange absurdity of settling ambiguities, instead of leaving them; and it was the constant rule of their policy not to play with the rights of nations, but to state and to clear them.

During the residence of our Agent in the city of Athens, he seems to have been extremely curious in examining the constitution of Greece; and, while he writes to the Ministers on matters of political and public business, he does not fail to transmit faithful accounts to his friends of the learning prevailing in the country, and little private anecdotes relating to himself. Far from dealing in trivial and low occurrences, his Letters are full of the most important information. We never find him pressing for any increase of his remittances, but contented with his first appointments. It is agreeable enough to observe him upon some occasions deviating from the dull road of his instructions, and acting with that freedom and latitude of judgment, which a wise man should be indulged in exercising, and with that air of authority and understanding,

which naturally creates esteem. By a peculiar dexterity in his conversation, he makes use of the access which he had gained to the considerable men of Athens to the service of his master, and the interest of Persia; and, though he now and then breaks out into strong and rapturous expressions on liberty, he cannot lay aside a zealous regard for the one, or a firm attachment to the other. In a word, he is a pattern of address in negotiation; and I doubt not but if WICQUEFORT had been acquainted with his character, he had numbered CLEANDER among the most eminent masters of that art, and recommended his Letters in the same page with Cardinal D'OSSAT'S.¹

Besides these sentiments, which evidently flow from a perusal of the Papers now offered to the Public, a secret pleasure will arise in the breast of every man of taste and knowledge, when he considers how much they tend to corroborate the testimony of THUCYDIDES, to heighten our idea of his impartiality, and to wipe off the unjust aspersions that have been thrown upon his memory by JOSEPHUS.² At

¹ Vide Wicquefort's Complete Amb. sect. 10. B. 2.

² Vide Joseph, con. Apion. where he endeavours to lessen the credit of the Greek historians,

the same time we may derive a more adequate notion of the customs of the Greeks and Persians from these Letters of our Agent, in which the living manners are expressed, than we can possibly gather from the most formal and elaborate treatises of grave antiquaries. Not to mention several curious particulars of Court subtilty and intrigue interwoven in the course of them, which may seem perhaps beneath the notice of an historian, but which yet have a wonderful effect in unravelling the secret springs and true causes of action.

As to the objections, which have been framed with peculiar success, to the genuineness of the Epistles of PHALARIS and THEMISTOCLES by a formidable champion in the republic of letters; such objections as are drawn from the uncertain time, in which the great men who are spoken of in them are supposed to have flourished, and from the matter of the Epistles themselves; we conceive that no such can lie against the collection before us. ATOSSA³, who was the first inventress of letter-writing in the opinion of our critic, had been several years dead, before CLEANDER made his appearance on the

³ Vide Bentley against Boyle, p. 535.

theatre of human affairs; and after her death she could no longer monopolize the use of it. It is therefore apprehended with an honest confidence, that we have little to fear either from the extensive learning or penetration of that critic ⁴.

To conclude: The Translator begs leave to congratulate the literary world on the discovery of this hidden treasure of antiquity, which may be considered as a large accession to the wealth it already stands possessed of; and to congratulate himself on being the unworthy instrument, after an interval of so many ages, of presenting these inestimable relics to the Public.

C.

⁴ Dr. Bentley was then alive.

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It is therefore apprehended with an honest
the could no longer monopolize the use of it.
interest of human affairs; and after the death

To conclude: The President has done
to compensate the many wrongs on the
coast of the Indian tribes of America,
which may be considered as a great
to the people is an ever-lasting
and to compensate him for the
to the people, after a period of
many years, of restoring their
to the people.

P R E F A C E

TO THE EDITION OF 1781.

IT is thought proper to preserve the Preface to the Octavo Edition of these Letters ;, which supposes the Work to be genuine, and a Translation from an old Arabic Version: but when a due interval of time has elapsed, the truth may be owned; the illusion vanishes; it is a masquerade which is closed; the fancy-dresses and the dominos are returned to their respective wardrobes; the company walk about again in their proper habits, and return to their ordinary occupations in life.

The Authors of these Letters were a Society of Friends, who were contemporaries at the University of Cambridge, about the years 1739 and 1740; all their names (except that of the Writer of this Preface) were an ornament to the place. The world was unfortunately deprived of the talents, virtues, and services of one of them, when they were most wanted, both by his own Profession and by the Public:

not above two or three of the set are now living; they lament the loss of their colleagues, and cultivate the remembrance of their former friendly connexion.

The Learned, into whose hands these Letters may fall, will best judge how correctly the manners of antiquity are kept up, and how truly the history of those times is represented in them.

The Grecian part of the correspondence is exactly stated from THUCYDIDES and PLUTARCH; the Persian is extended and improved from the few remaining fragments of CTESIAS: but it is hoped, the *Costume* of the East is preserved throughout, and the events such as might happen under a well-governed absolute monarchy — the picture of which is more flattering than experience commonly justifies.

The general character of CLEANDER is taken from MAHMUT, the Turkish Spy; but it is finished upon the Greek model; and the philosophical and literary features of it are copied from the Schools of Athens, and the Groves of Academus. The forms and language of the negotiation part of the Letters may be thought too refined for the times when they are supposed to be

written;

written; the dispatches of those great Ministers, TEMPLE and D'ESTRADES, were the originals which the writers in that department attempted to imitate.

HERODOTUS, PAUSANIAS, and STRABO have furnished the Antiquities of Ægypt; HYDE's *Religio Vet. Persarum* has been chiefly followed in the Letters which relate to that obscure subject, and it is hoped with some success; and so as to form an interesting contrast with the Greek worship and philosophy.

Perhaps the character and travels of the young Persian Satrap ORSAMES might have been more varied and enlivened, and he might have been brought to Greece to serve a volunteer in their armies, and improve under the military institutions of Athens and Sparta; but it is thought advisable, on the whole, to make no alterations from the original edition, particularly as the learned and ingenious Writer of those Letters is deceased.

Not many years ago the younger CREBILLON, a name well known among the novel-writers of France, published a work in four volumes under this very title of *Lettres Athéniennes*; they relate to the same times, and have some of the same characters with ours, as PERICLES,

ASPASIA, CLEON, and ALCIBIADES; but the turn of that correspondence is so different from that of the present Work, that no comparison can be made between them; the Readers will give the preference according to their respective tastes and inclinations. — We hope our characters are antique. Those of Mr. CREBILLON are in a great degree the *petits-maitres* and *petites-maitresses* of Paris; and the idea of improving the manners and morals of society does not seem to have been the principal object of that ingenious writer in those Letters, any more than in the *Sopha* et *l'Ecumoire*.

H.

To the ABBÉ BARTHÉLEMI.

MILORD DOVER, de la famille de Yorke, saisit avec empressement l'occasion qui se présente par le canal de M. Barthélemi, Ministre Plénipotentiaire de sa Majesté très Chrétienne à la cour de Londres, d'offrir à M. l'Abbé Barthélemi son oncle l'hommage si justement dû au savant & élégant Auteur du VOYAGE DU JEUNE ANACHARSIS EN GRECE, en lui faisant parvenir le Volume ci-joint des LETTRES ATHÉNIENNES. L'origine de cette production est expliquée dans la seconde Préface à la tête de l'ouvrage : les Lettres signées P. sont de Philippe Yorke, Comte de Hardwicke, fils aîné du Grand Chancelier de ce nom ; celles signées C. sont de son frère, Mr. Charles Yorke, qui est lui-même parvenu au poste éminent de Grand Chancelier, mais qui est mort trop tôt pour sa famille & pour sa patrie ; les autres sont écrites ou par leurs parens ou par leurs amis. En priant M. l'Abbé Barthélemi d'agréer ce petit présent littéraire, l'on n'a point la présomption de comparer cet ouvrage au charmant Voyage d'Anacharsis, mais uniquement de donner un témoignage d'estime à son illustre Auteur ; & de marquer combien on a été flatté de

trouver qu'une idée qui a pris son origine ici il y a près de cinquante ans a été perfectionnée avec tant d'élégance long temps après, sans aucune communication, par un Auteur digne du sujet.

A LONDRES,
ce 21 Décembre 1789.

DOVER.

To Lord DOVER.

MILORD,

J'AI l'honneur de vous remercier du bel exemplaire des LETTRES ATHÉNIENNES que vous avez eu la bonté de m'envoyer, & surtout de la note trop flatteuse que vous avez daigné y tracer de votre main. J'entendis l'été dernier parler pour la première fois de cet ouvrage; et ce fut par M. Jenkinson. Je n'ai pu jusqu'à présent le parcourir qu'à la hâte; si je l'avois connu plutôt, ou je n'aurois pas commencé le mien, ou j'aurois taché d'approcher de ce beau modele. Pourquoi ne l'a-t-on pas communiqué au public? Pourquoi n'est-il pas traduit dans toutes les langues? Je sacrifierois volontiers mes derniers jours au plaisir d'en enrichir notre littérature, si je connoissois mieux les finesses de la langue Angloise: mais je n'entreprendrois pas de l'achever, de peur qu'il

ne m'arrivât la même chose qu'à ceux qui ont voulu continuer le discours de Bossuet sur l'Histoire Universelle.

Daignez agréer l'hommage de la reconnoissance & du respect avec lequel j'ai l'honneur d'être,

MILORD,

Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

A PARIS

BARTHÉLEMI.

ce 1 Janvier 1790.

*Earl MANSFIELD to the Earl of
HARDWICKE.*

MY DEAR LORD,

GIVE me leave to return you my warmest thanks for the ATHENIAN LETTERS.

— Veteres revocamus amores,
Atque olim amissas flemus amicitias.

I grieve exceedingly that your Lordship has suffered so much, and hope you are better. Nobody can wish it more sincerely than

Your most obedient humble servant,

MANSFIELD.

MARCH 1783.

EXPLANATION of the CAPITALS
at the End of each LETTER.

- P.** Honorable Mr. YORKE, late Earl of Hardwicke.
C. Honorable CHARLES YORKE.
R. Rev. Dr. ROOKE, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge.
G. Rev. Dr. GREEN, late Bishop of Lincoln.
W. DANIEL WRAY, Esquire.
H. Rev. Mr. HEATON, of Bennet College.
E. Dr. HEBERDEN.
O. HENRY COVENTRY, Esquire, Author of the Letters of Philemon to Hydaspes.
L. Rev. Mr. LAWRY, Prebendary of Rochester.
T. Mrs. CATHERINE TALBOT.
B. Rev. Dr. BIRCH.
S. Rev. Dr. SALTER, late Master of the Charter-house.

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ATHENIAN LETTERS:

**OR, THE
EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE
OF**

AN AGENT OF THE KING OF PERSIA,

Residing at ATHENS during the

PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

A. M. 3573. 2d Year of the 87th Olympiad.

The first Year of the Peloponnesian War.

LETTER I.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, Chief Scribe to

Artaxerxes King of Persia.

I THINK it my duty to give you an account of my safe arrival at Athens, by the first ship that sails for Ephesus. My brother the merchant will take care to convey my letters safely to ARTAPHERNES, the governor of Sardis, who I suppose, has received orders to send them immediately by expresses to court. As I am hardly settled in this place, and have just gone

through the formalities, which are requisite for all strangers to comply with, who intend to settle at Athens, (as being admitted by the Areopagitic council, entered in a public register, and chusing a patron,) I can only pretend to give such accounts of the present state of affairs, as are founded on the common reports of the city. The Persian council must already have been informed, that all things have long carried the appearance of a war between Athens and Lacedæmon, upon pretence of injuries done by the former, to the allies of the latter. I shall lay before thee a short view of the rise of these differences, and the height to which they are now arrived. The Corcyreans being engaged in a quarrel with the Corinthians about Epidamnus, a colony of the former on the coast of Illyrium, unable alone to make head against them, sent a deputation to desire an alliance with Athens. Their request was strongly opposed by the ambassadors of Corinth, and the people in the first assembly determined against the Corcyreans, but changed their opinion in the second by the advice of PERICLES, and voted that a league should be concluded with them. In pursuance of it they sent to their assistance ten gallies, with orders that they should only protect the possessions of Corcyra, without attacking the Corinthians. These gallies were soon after engaged in a naval fight, where each party laid claim to the advantage; and at the same time Potidæa, a tributary city of the Athenians in Thrace, revolted against them, under pretence that they had imposed hard

conditions upon them. Corinth, its mother-city, sent troops to its relief against the Athenian army, which laid siege to it; and at the same time dispatched a solemn embassy to Lacedæmon in conjunction with their allies, complaining that the Athenians had broken the treaties, by assisting the Corcyreans, and interdicting all commerce with the Megareans. The Lacedæmonians, hurried on by the violent advices of STHENELAIDAS, the Ephorus, resolved after a long debate, notwithstanding the remonstrances of their king ARCHIDAMUS, that the Athenians had violated the leagues. In consequence of this vote they demanded of them to raise the siege of Potidæa, and repeal the decree against Megara. The Athenians declared their readiness to make many of the concessions required, provided similar ones were made on the side of Sparta; or to submit every point in dispute to any impartial tribunal; concluding with a resolution, (even if these pacific overtures were rejected,) not to commence hostilities, but to defend themselves vigorously if they were attacked. I think this summary necessary, noble scribe, not to inform you, who have already received information of these events, but to give the better connexion to the sequel of my dispatches. It is now generally agreed, that an open rupture will shortly ensue; for advice arrived here last night from Platea, a town of Boeotia, and an ally of this state, that the Thebans, who with the rest of Peloponnesus side with Lacedæmon, had by treason gained admission into the place, and kept possession some little time; but the

citizens taking advantage of the night, fell upon and cut off the whole party, except 200, who were taken prisoners. The people this very day in an extraordinary assembly decreed, that a supply of troops and provisions should forthwith be sent thither; and that messengers should be dispatched to all their allies, with the news of what has passed, and with orders to hasten their warlike preparations. A report is current, that the Spartans and their allies are assembling their forces at the Isthmus of Corinth. I find the opinions of the people various about the true springs of this war. The party in opposition to PERICLES scruple not to say, that no other reason can be given for it but his personal interest, which engages him to set Greece in a flame, that the Athenians may be left at leisure to examine his conduct, particularly with regard to the public accounts, and be obliged through the necessity of affairs to commit themselves to his management. Libels and satires are dispersed against him with great boldness, and at theatrical representations he is reproached to his face in the vilest accusations and most scurrilous language. All these injuries he bears with admirable temper. Indeed such is the natural inconstancy and impatience of the Athenians, that in case of any signal success, or inconvenience from the present measures, he will run the utmost hazard of losing the power and influence he now enjoys. It is besides alledged with good reason, that these divisions in Greece will give great advantage to Persia, which will never fail to

encourage them by playing off one side against the other, till both are reduced so low, that our mighty monarch may take ample revenge for the battle of Salamis; and the inglorious peace with CIMON. The friends of PARICLES are not less industrious in justifying him; but I own, were I a Grecian, I should exceedingly lament these unhappy quarrels, of which no one can possibly see the consequences; or rather, if they continue, the event cannot but be detrimental to the common interest of Greece.

Thou art happy, illustrious minister, in depending, not upon the uncertain pleasure of a mutinous and inconstant people; but the will of a wise and beneficent prince, who measures the counsels of his servants, not by their success, but their intrinsic goodness; and whose prudent conduct, inspired by the great OROMASDES; is able to allay the rude clamors of faction, and suffers nothing to be heard through the wide empire of Persia, but the still small voice of peace and unanimity.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER II.

CLEANDER to HIPPIAS his Brother, a Merchant at Ephesus.

I HAVE enclosed in your packet a letter to GOBRYAS, which you must transmit to the satrap ARTAPHERNES, and at the same time excuse my

not writing to him upon account of the hurry I am in at present, which will not permit me to think of any thing, but the necessary business of my employment; till I am a little settled. Our voyage from Ephesus was very prosperous, and my curiosity increased the nearer I drew to a city, which is renowned through the world for the wisdom of its laws, the many eminent persons it hath produced, the magnificence of its buildings, and the stop it has so often put to the utmost efforts of the Persian empire; so that it may properly enough be styled the barrier of Greece. The entrance into the harbour of Piræus strikes one with astonishment; the vast number of ships, both for trade and war, which are continually lying there; the face of business which appears in the workmen at the dock; and the crowds of merchants, and of naval officers, passing every moment between the haven and the city, form a very grand and a very pleasing spectacle to a stranger. One can no longer wonder, that a state, where such a spirit of industry and freedom prevails, though under the disadvantage of a craggy, unfruitful, and narrow territory, should eclipse monarchies of fifty times its extent, where the labor of the people wastes itself in cultivating the arts of luxury; and the highest ambition amongst them is; who shall be the meanest slave to the sovereign. I have made choice of your old acquaintance and host, PHILEMON, to be my patron; he seems to be a true republican, and a man of great honor and probity. His advice will be of use to me, with regard

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to my behaviour here; and his knowledge and experience will greatly assist me in my inquiries into the constitution and affairs of Athens. As this ship carries you letters from your correspondents in this place, I shall add nothing of the news stirring here at present; and only recommend it to you, to take care of the speedy conveyance of my dispatches and remittances. In the midst of that hurry of mercantile business, which renders you the greatest merchant of the Persian empire, and a more useful subject to your king than the wealthiest and proudest satrap, bestow some moments in thinking of your brother; who, though placed in a hazardous and important situation, remote from his family and friends, will ever preserve the tenderest regards for your welfare and prosperity. Whilst I watch over the motions of Greece, and, like a sentinel, foretel the approach of every danger to my country, do you perform a far greater service to it, by exporting all those costly vanities, and that ostentatious magnificence, which have enervated the degenerate posterity of Cyrus. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER III.

CLEANDER to ARTAPHERNES, *the Governor*
of Sardis.

As my family and myself have been always honored with your protection, and as you

first recommended me to the Persian court for this employment; there is no one who has a better right to be informed of the steps I take, and the intelligence I receive. You may acquaint GOBRYAS in your next letters, that war is at last declared between the two famous republics, Athens and Lacedæmon. This state, by the instigation of PERICLES, refused to admit a herald, who was sent by ARCHIDAMUS, king of Sparta, to offer the last terms upon which peace would be concluded. We expect every day to hear, that the army of the allies, which consists of sixty thousand men, is in full march for the frontiers of Attica. A few days ago exact lists of the land and naval forces of Athens were laid before an assembly of the people. The troops of various kinds designed for the land service amount to 31,800 men; but their fleet, upon which they principally depend, may be easily completed to 300 galleys; with part of which they intend to guard their own coast, and to ravage those of their enemies; and with the rest to raise contributions from their allies for the service of the war.

The generality of people here were very eager in promoting such measures as had an immediate tendency to bring on a war; but they must soon begin to feel the inconveniencies of one. PERICLES has declared, that they will never carry it on with any prospect of success, unless they rely entirely on their fleet; since their land army is not strong enough to keep the field against the united force of Peloponnesus. He has farther told them, that they

must abandon and lay waste the country about Athens, in order to deprive the enemies of subsistence, during the time of their invasion. In consequence of his advice, the town is filling daily with vast numbers out of the country, who have destroyed their houses, transported their cattle and goods into the neighbouring islands, and are come to seek a lodging in the houses of their friends and relations. But the greatest part of the multitude must take up their quarters in the empty places of the city, and even in the temples. This removal, though complied with, is very inconvenient and disagreeable to many families; who, after having lived quietly in the country ever since the Persian invasion, and followed the innocent occupations of a rural life, are now obliged to leave their paternal seats and household gods, and to exchange repose and peace, for arms, hurry, and fatigue. However, this measure, though it appears hard, is very necessary; for as there is no town in Attica, except Athens, large enough to receive the inhabitants of the country, they would, if they continued there, be exposed to the dismal alternative of falling by the sword of the enemy, or of seeing their possessions ruined, and themselves made captives. PERICLES, like a wise statesman, despises the murmurs of his opponents; and well understanding where the true strength of his country lies, is hastening the equipment of a large squadron, which I hear is intended to lay waste Peloponnesus, and oblige the allies, either to keep their forces at

home for the defence of their coasts, or retire out of the Athenian territories upon the first news of their own being invaded. Solemn sacrifices have been offered at the shrines of all their gods, and particularly at that of MINERVA, the patroness of Athens, for protection against the attempts of their enemies. But you know, noble satrap, that the great OROMASDES vouchsafes not his assistance to those who make the most costly oblations, but to those who address him with the purest intentions. If this war has been undertaken in support of the honor and independence of Athens, what can be a more proper step than to appeal to the justice of providence? But if it owes its rise to motives of ambition, not of safety; of interest, not injuries; do not they deserve the severest punishments, who call down the vengeance of their gods on others, whilst themselves are really the offenders? Ought not those miseries, to which they devote their neighbours, to fall with double weight upon their own heads? Adieu. P.

LETTER IV.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS, one of the seven Counsellors of State to the King of Persia, and General of his Army.

MY letters to the Persian ministers have given early and faithful accounts of the opening of the present war, and the steps which

have been hitherto taken by each party. But I know your penetrating eye is not contented with surveying the outward appearances of things; your curiosity invites you, and your sagacity enables you, to search into the most refined secrets of policy, to examine the constitutions of different states, and, from the natural dispositions of the people and the tempers of their rulers, to divine their future conduct. The result of these inquiries is applied to the honor of your master, and the service of his people. I remember, when plenipotentiaries were sent to conclude that inglorious peace with Athens, after the victories of CIMON, you foretold, that if we would let the Greeks alone, they would destroy themselves. The prophecy is at last fulfilled; the chief states of Greece, headed by Athens and Lacedæmon, have begun a war, which, according to all appearances, will be long, bloody, and active. Ambition and resentment equally inflame both parties: the Athenians contend for the preservation of the authority they possess; the Lacedæmonians for the recovery of that which they formerly enjoyed. The naval force of the one will for the present turn the scale of the war generally in their favor; the indefatigable industry of the other may, in a course of years, incline it to themselves. The luxury and licentiousness, which begin to corrupt the ancient simplicity of Athens, may in time damp the efforts of her ambition; the patience and discipline of Lacedæmon will make amends for what they want in vivacity and address. However fatal the

effects of these civil discords may prove to Greece, Persia has reason to rejoice at them; it will be her part to add perpetual fuel to the flame already kindled, with supplies of men and money to the weakest. By pursuing such measures, the great king, from being contemned and ridiculed by every petty republic, will become courted and esteemed by the greatest. That respect, which in the times of THEMISTOCLES they would not have shown to his sacred person, they will now pay more obsequiously to the meanest of his satraps; and the Persians, from being styled barbarians, will be esteemed by the party they assist as the deliverers of Greece.

PERICLES is the great conductor of the war; but whether he promotes it through a regard for the interests of his country, or of himself, is uncertain. I have already mentioned the accusations of his enemies, who attribute it wholly to motives of the latter sort. I can only add, that I am informed, that before my arrival, impeachments were brought against several of his friends, as PHIDIAS, ASPASIA, and ANAXAGORAS; nor had he any reason to boast of success in bringing them off. The statuary was unjustly condemned; the lady's acquittal he procured by tears and earnest supplications to her judges; and the philosopher he was obliged to send out of the town. The opposite party, to harass him farther, obtained a decree, that he should produce exact accounts of the public monies which had been laid out by his direction. These circumstances

being put together, I think it not improbable, that he has fallen in with the dispositions for war, in order to dispel those clouds of enmity and malice, by finding his restless countrymen more important occupations. But he will never let them manage it as they please; and whilst he continues in power, peace or war will be determined, not by the votes of a headstrong multitude, but the calm resolves of his own prudence and deep penetration. Such is the influence which his great abilities, particularly his masterly talent of speaking, give him, over a people the most difficult of all others to be controuled or contradicted. Another part of his conduct, which contributes not a little to establish his authority, is, that every body knows, though the whole revenues of Athens have passed many years through his hands, he has spent them all in rendering his native country the envy and admiration of strangers, by the magnificence of its buildings, without improving in the least his own paternal inheritance. Forgive, sage MEGABYZUS, the length of this dispatch, and attribute it to my desire of obeying your commands with exactness. May you always continue a support and safeguard to the throne of your prince; may you no more experience the adversities of fortune, and the fickleness of court favor; but long enjoy without envy those high offices and dignities, to which your past services and merits so justly entitle you. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER V.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES, *first Chamberlain to the King of Persia.*

IT has proved the most disagreeable circumstance of my employment, that I have not yet been able to write to my friends; who, I hope, do not imagine, that because I have resided a few months at Athens, I have quite forgotten the relation I bear to Persia; or that because I am engaged in the offices of a political life, I therefore intend to disregard those of the social. To deal frankly with you, though you are a courtier, I thought it my duty to prefer business of a public nature, to amusements of a private one; and to make my employment sit easy upon me by a little practice, before I turned my thoughts another way. And besides, I was not inclined to send imperfect accounts of a nation, whilst I was a stranger to it: such a proceeding would have been disingenuous and ridiculous. The first question you would probably have me resolve, is, what peculiar difference I find in the manners of Greece and Persia; since custom has placed as many marks of distinction in the civil manners of every nation, as Providence has displayed in the natural bodies of each individual. I will tell you, then, a Persian would find nothing more surprising, than the unbounded freedom of action and conversation which reigns here. The counsels of the great king are impenetrable;

we discover nothing of them till they take effect; whilst here every measure is known long before it is put in execution, and canvassed with as much liberty in common conversation, as in the assemblies of the people. We approach our mighty monarch with postures of adoration, and address him in language which is used to the Deity. At Athens the magistrates are distinguished more by being virulently abused, than by any mark of authority. **PERICLES** himself is sure to be the object aimed at by every one, who writes either scandalous libels to be dispersed about the city, or performances designed for public representation. The actors themselves sometimes appear upon the stage in masks, which are made exactly to resemble the face of the person ridiculed. The Persian magnificence appears most at their entertainments; the Athenian, at their solemn festivals. The Asiatic feasts are remarkable for the vast quantities of provisions, the costliness of the preparations, and the sumptuous furniture; the chief recommendation of a Greek one is, the elegance and variety of the conversation, which induced an Athenian to make this observation; "Our entertainments not only please, when we give them, but the day after." The Asiatic taste and grandeur appear in the palaces of their princes and satraps; the Grecian in the temples of their gods, and the public buildings. Not a nobleman in Persia but shows his rank by the richness of his dress, and the number of his attendants;

whereas here you cannot distinguish a citizen from a slave by his habit; and the wealthiest Athenian, the most considerable person in the city, is not ashamed to go to market himself. In Persia the eyes of all are turned toward the sovereign, and they regulate their conduct by his: in the free republics of Greece the people are king, and resemble other monarchs in their bad qualities more than in their good ones; for they are fickle and imperious, severe and obstinate. I have in this letter just sketched the great outlines, which mark the difference of manners between Greece and Asia: I may perhaps give the picture a few more touches, if it appears that what I have already performed has afforded entertainment. I desire you would not fail to send me the chit-chat of the court, and the news stirring in the centre of the empire. Consider, to a man employed abroad, the most trifling occurrences, which turn his thoughts to his country and friends, are interesting. I wish you length of days in the post you at present possess, since you have gained the ear of your sovereign without flattery, and can amuse him, without listening for materials to the idle stories of slanderers and tale-bearers. Farewel.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe to ARTAXERXES King of Persia*, to CLEANDER at Athens.

THY diligence in sending speedy advices, and thy judgment in chusing such as are material and interesting, have met with deserved approbation at the Persian court. Thy letters are ordered by the council to be deposited in the archives of the empire; and the great sovereign of the East himself has deigned to cast a gracious eye on the labors of his servant, to express the satisfaction they have given him, and to assure you of his royal favor; an honor, CLEANDER, which I know will inspire thee with industry, to undergo the difficulties of thy employment; with resolution, to confront the dangers of it; and with zeal to serve a prince, whose benign influence (like that of the radiant Mithras) extends to every part of his empire, and makes itself felt by the meanest slave who approaches it. The contents of thy dispatches afford pleasure to every Persian. ARIMANIUS dooms the sons of Greece to irresistible perdition; he inflames their minds with civil discord; and turns the weapons, which were sharpened against us, into their own bosoms. O may this accursed being, the origin of ill, satiated with the misfortunes that have befallen the kingdom of CYRUS, exert for the future his baneful power amongst our enemies; and not only arm Greece against itself, but instil the venom of sedition and discontent into each

particular state! I see by your letters, that a considerable party in Athens are engaged in a warm opposition to the measures of PERICLES; and no doubt the course of a long and expensive war will afford them many opportunities to ruin his credit with the people. You cannot perform a more important service, than by encouraging any project to distress him; for I wish no worse to Athens, than that he may experience the fortune of THEMISTOCLES, and find like him that esteem and kindness amongst strangers which his ungrateful countrymen refuse him. However, all the instructions of this nature must be left to your own discretion, as you are upon the spot, and have better lights to conduct yourself by, than any you can receive from hence. Fail not to intermix your historical dispatches with accounts of the constitutions of the different governments of Greece, the dispositions and customs of the people, and the characters of the ruling men. I foresee, that the part we shall be obliged to take in their affairs will make such informations absolutely necessary; and bring us into a more familiar acquaintance with the nations amongst whom you reside. I dare say, thou always bearest in mind the importance of the trust reposed in thee; and the submission and readiness, with which it is thy duty to receive and execute the orders of the monarch of Asia, whose power of rewarding his faithful servants is equalled by nothing, but the bounty which he displays in doing it.

From the court at Ecbatana.

P.

LETTER VII.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

THY curious and discerning eye, which dwells not upon superficial matters or common occurrences, but pries into the more hidden springs of political measures and secret reasons of state, enables thee to be eminently serviceable to the ministers of our mighty empire: and thou failest not to entertain thy friends with novelties relating to the constitution of those republics, which are established upon a plan of government so different from ours. But the more eagerly thy epistles are here received on these accounts, the greater difficulty dost thou impose upon thy friends to find any thing worth sending thee in return. As to what relates more particularly to thy instructions, it belongs only to the secretaries and great counsellors of our awful monarch to correspond with thee; and any thing farther of the politics or intrigues of this court thou canst not expect from them who are but rarely admitted into the cabinet. But since, as you observe, the most trivial concerns are in some sort interesting to one in your circumstances, from a place which he esteems his home, I will write, if it be but upon trifles, that have nothing further to recommend them, than that they travel so far, and that they are sent from the court of Ecbatana. The plague, which had

caused so great a mortality in Persia, and had long cast a damp upon all the gaieties of our court, is nearly over in these parts. And though such public calamities, while they last, or are just fresh upon the minds of men, tend naturally to occasion seriousness, and to give the most careless a short interval of sober thinking, yet we too commonly find, that they are no sooner removed, than the impression of them begins to wear off; and those who had of late but narrowly escaped the danger, return only with a keener appetite to their former pleasures. And thus I may say it happens at this time; never was the court of Persia more splendid; never did extravagancies in dress and gallantry run higher. The fashions indeed, which so universally prevail among us, we know, were of Median original, and had their rise first in this place, before it became the metropolis of united kingdoms, and whilst the Medes and Persians were a separate people. But though compared with the Persian plainness in the reign of CYRUS, the Medes might then seem advanced to the first pitch of luxury; yet posterity have so well improved upon them, that old ASTYAGES himself, with his politest courtiers, would now make an awkward appearance at Ecbatana. We have here lately solemnized the nuptials of the great satrap of Bactria, ARASPES, with ARTAMINTA, daughter of the governor of Sardis, who is esteemed one of the first beauties of this court, and is a reigning favorite of the empress; and for the greater magnificence, the ceremony was

performed in the royal gardens. And as if the natural beauties of the place in this delightful season had not been enough to have charmed every sense, a pompous colonnade, of a stupendous height, was erected in the middle of a spacious lawn. Through this the company were conducted to a stately pavilion, that ascended by several steps, covered over with a canopy of the richest embroidery of gold and silver, and a thicket of blossoming greens surrounded it¹, when the embowering shades alone would formerly have been thought upon any occasion the most agreeable shelter from the noon-day heat. Upon a sofa of state, at the upper end, sat the supreme monarch of the East; and on another his consort by him: a little lower the nuptial rites were celebrated, and the happy ARASPES joined his hands with the beauteous ARTAMINTA. The other most distinguished favourites stood about the throne, and the rest of the gaudy retinue attended at an humbler distance below. The company afterwards adjourned into another part of the gardens, where with equal splendor the nuptial feast was prepared. I shall not attempt to describe the luxurious dainties that were served up, neither shall I attempt to set forth the sumptuous finery of those who adorned the nuptials; nor canst thou take any pleasure in hearing, that the

¹ Ἐν γὰρ μὴν τῷ θέρει ἐκ ἀρχῆσιν αὐτοῖς οὐθ' αἱ τῶν δένδρων, οὐθ' αἱ πέλρων σκιαί, ἀλλ' ἐν ταύταις ἑτέρας σκιάς ἄνθρωποι μηχανώμενοι αὐτοῖς παρεσῶσι.

Xenoph. de Inst. Cyr. lib. viii. ed. Franc. p. 241. C.

youth of Persia, upon whom depend our hopes of maintaining the monarchy of the world, should be ² more exact in perfuming their hair, curling it in ringlets, and enlivening their complexion with artificial washes, than the softest even of the female sex. Amongst those who made the most gallant appearance, was the young ORSAMES, the son of ARTEUS, president of the tribunal of justice, and a relation of ARTAMINTA. His dress indeed was extremely rich, and suitable to the occasion; but the unaffected graces of his person, which owe nothing to the disguise of art, made him appear with a manly ease in every motion, that, as it turns our esteem upon him, makes the effeminate airs of the rest appear more ridiculous. He seems by nature and inclination to be formed to virtue, and has acquired all those noble accomplishments, for which the Persian education was so famed of old: and with a laudable thirst after knowledge and improvement, he desires to acquaint himself with the arts, learning, and policy of other countries. He is therefore setting out upon the tour of Egypt and Greece; and waited only for these nuptials to be over before he went. To satisfy your curiosity and his own, he desires by me to be recommended to you, having a design to correspond with you from distant parts, and will take pleasure to be instructed by your letters in the manners and customs of Greece before he arrives there. But I must not omit

² Xenoph. de Inst. Cyri. lib. viii. Herod. lib. ix.

to inform you how the grand solemnity ended: after the banquet was over, when the cool and pleasant time of the evening came on, the artificial music, which had for a while given place to the sweeter harmony of ten thousand nightingales, that warble through those groves, and whose notes upon this occasion seemed inspired with a more ravishing melody, struck up at once from all the various instruments of sound in full concert. The company was then dispersed through different walks, that all centered upon the pavilion, where the great monarch, his queen, with the other chief satraps, sat to enjoy the sweets of the evening. When the twilight had now given place to the darker shades of night, in an instant the gloom was dispersed, and it seemed as if a whole firmament of stars had shot up among the trees to renew at once their intermingled lights, and rival the blaze of day. The birds were awakened by the deceit, and began again their enchanting strains more sweetly than when the early beams of MITHRAS are first displayed from behind the curtains of the east. The nuptial hymn composed by the Mage THIAMIS was sung by six comely youths, and as many blooming virgins clad in white, and the happy pair were conducted to the genial bed.

From Ecbatana.

L.

LETTER VIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe to*
ARTAXERXES King of Persia.

I RECEIVED thy dispatch with due reverence; I kissed the royal signet, and bowed my head in token of submission to the commands of the sovereign of the East, transmitted by his faithful minister. Thy commendations, illustrious scribe, are of more value in my sight, than all the treasures of Asia; and I look upon the gracious acceptance which the mighty ARTAXERXES vouchsafes my services, as a nobler reward, than if he bestowed on me the most potent satrapy in the whole Persian empire. Since my last letters, the war has been carried on with greater preparation than effect; and the blood yet spilt has rather served to exasperate both parties, than to cool the resentments of either.

The army of the allies, commanded by ARCHIDAMUS king of Sparta, advanced to the frontiers of Attica, and laid siege to Oenoe; but being repulsed in their attacks, they raised the siege, and advanced further into the country, till they came into an open town called Acharnæ, not sixty furlongs from Athens, where they encamped. The Athenians, irritated at the boldness of the enemy, and sensibly afflicted to see their possessions ruined and wasted in their sight, earnestly desired to sally out of their walls, and come to an engagement; but PERICLES,

withstanding both their pressing desires, and the severe railleries of his enemies, who reproached him with cowardice and stupidity, persevered in declining so hazardous a measure; and, like a skilful pilote in a storm, relied on his own superior knowledge and experience, without regarding the cries or menaces of the ignorant passengers. Indeed it is surprizing, that a single man should not only have authority enough to oppose the unanimous opinion of a headstrong and mutinous people, in whose hands the supreme government is lodged; but even to hinder any assembly from being called, lest in the present heat some rash resolution might be taken. However, to keep up their spirits, and divert the strength of the enemy, he sent out a squadron of an hundred gallies with troops on board, who made descents, and ravaged the sea-coasts of Peloponnesus, and Laconia; which obliged the allies, after having consumed their provisions, to decamp and return home. The Athenians, as soon as they were retired, set apart a thousand talents, and an hundred gallies for their defence against an invasion by sea; and made it capital for any one who should move to have them applied to any other use. Thou wilt have a complete survey of the theatre of the war, when I tell thee that it extends as far as Thrace, where the Athenians are now besieging Potidæa, which, at the instigations of the Corinthians (their founders) and the Lacedæmonians, revolted from them, along with Chalcis and Botiæa, and were assisted by PERDICCAS king

of Macedon. I just now learned, that he is reconciled to this state by the mediation of SITALCES, a Thracian prince; and has engaged to join with PHORMIO, the Athenian general, against the Chalcideans.

As no action of importance has yet happened, I will not tire thy patience with tedious relations of every skirmish and trifling event. It will be more useful to let thee into the reasons of PERICLES's conduct, which may appear to deserve the name of timidity rather than of prudence; but he wisely considered the extreme hazard of facing an enemy in the field, whose troops were superior both in number and goodness to the Athenian; that a defeat would absolutely ruin their affairs, and that a victory would not balance, in its advantages, the peril that attended it; since Peloponnesus could easily have recruited the conquered army; whilst the lives of his citizens would be thrown away, and their attention drawn off from their naval strength to the land service, though their safety depends entirely on cultivating the former.

The head of the party in opposition to him is CLEON, the son of a currier, a person of an assuming and violent temper; rather formed to disturb than serve his country; and with talents to make him a popular demagogue, but not a statesman. PERICLES has no great reason to apprehend the weak attempts of a CLEON, when his power and influence over the Athenians has been sufficient to banish CIMON and THUCYDIDES, men of real abilities and integrity: the name of the former can never be forgotten in

Pérsia as long as it continues an empire. I am grieved to hear, that Asia, when it has scarcely recovered the miserable effects of war, is depopulated by a devouring pestilence, whose ravages are equally fatal, but more extensive, and whose contagion is alike dangerous to the cottage of the laborer and the palace of the prince. O may these punishments of the gods, which never come undeserved, help us to throw off our luxurious and dissolute manners, and to resume the masculine virtues and simplicity of the old Persians; since so extensive an inheritance, as the empire they transmitted to us, can never be preserved but by the same arts that raised it! Excuse my freedom, worthy minister, and remember it is the strongest proof I can give thee of my fidelity. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER IX.

HIPPIAS the Merchant to CLEANDER at

Athens.

IF any thing, my dearest brother, could add to the pleasure of hearing that you were safely arrived at Athens, it was, that you seem so sensible of the advantages accruing to a nation from an extended commerce: and indeed the striking impression which the bare view of a crowded port affords, is ocular demonstration, and an argument of the most convincing kind. I wish either your speculative or my

experimental knowledge may persuade the Persian ministry, that nothing tends so much as trade to the circulation of industry, wealth, and happiness through a people; that it becomes a common tie to connect the distant parts of the most extended empire; and that, like veins in the natural body, it conveys life, warmth, and health, over the political. I found myself much inclined to fall into a train of reflections of this nature in a journey, partly of business, and partly of pleasure, which I took lately to Ecbatana; and I will communicate to you the result of them. Three circumstances, I am persuaded, contribute to render the fine situation of Persia for commerce almost useless: one is, that in all their great naval preparations against the Greeks, they have constantly furnished themselves with ships and seamen from Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Cilicia, instead of encouraging their natural subjects to imitate the trading nations who are tributary to them, on whom the marine of the empire at present entirely depends. Another obstacle to trade arises from the late treaty with Athens, by one article of which it is agreed, "That no Persian vessel shall enter the seas, which extend from the Pontus Euxinus to the coasts of Pamphilia; and that no Persian troops shall come within three days march of those seas." A third circumstance, which is the most surprising of all, is, that they have contrived cataracts on the Tygris and Euphrates, to break the regular course of the stream, and to make the navigation of those rivers difficult.

I mention this instance from my own observation, at it shows not only their utter inattention to improve their natural advantages, but, what is much worse, a stupid obstinacy to oppose the means with which bountiful nature has supplied them to facilitate the carriage of their manufactures and inland commerce. They pretend that these cataracts prevent the enterprises of enemies, who might endeavour to invade them by coming up these great rivers: but I think this apprehension as vain as the precaution is absurd; for a naval force joined to the numerous land army which they keep up, would easily defeat any such attempts. Since my abode at Ecbatana, I have frequently represented to the ministers the advantages which must arise to the empire from destroying them, and I hope not quite ineffectually. I assure you, I am much pleased to take this opportunity of falling into my old train of thought; for I have lately led the life of a courtier rather than a merchant, to which the pleasures of the place have not a little invited me. The recommendations with which the governor of Sardis honored me, and the friends you have here, contribute more to my good reception, than any merit of my own. I dare say your curiosity will expect some account of the city where I am; I shall therefore endeavour to gratify it.

You need not be informed that Ecbatana is the metropolis of Media, and was anciently the seat of the Median, as it is now of the Persian, monarchs. It is situated on a rising

ground, not far from Mount Orontes, in a country called, for its peculiar pleasantness, "the garden of Persia."

The city is contained within an enclosure of seven walls, gradually rising one above another. The palace and the treasury are built within the innermost circle of the seven, which is distinguished from the rest by the embellishment of a gold coloring. Ecbatana has the advantage of being surrounded by spacious plains, particularly those of Nyssa, where the royal studs of fifty thousand horses are kept. These plains are bounded on one side by Mount Orontes; on the other by a large forest, amidst whose lofty trees arise the country-seats of the Persian nobility. I should tire thee with describing the solemnity of an audience of the great king; the magnificence with which he entertains the princes of the blood and the great satraps, and the pomp of his attendance, when he appears abroad: besides, I forget that you are no stranger to the splendor of the Asian court. As soon as it removes to Susa, its winter residence, I shall return to my old scene of life at Ephesus: uncorrupted; I hope, by the pleasures of the place, and I am sure not infected with the least tincture of a courtier's insincerity, when I assure you of my warmest affections. Adieu.

From Ecbatana.

P.

LETTER X.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER.

HYDASPES the chamberlain having informed thee of my intentions to correspond with thee during my travels, thou wilt not therefore be surpris'd at receiving a letter from this place. And truly, though I am a stranger to thy person, yet the reputation thou bearest here, not only for an approved capacity in business of the greatest weight and importance, but for a genius of the most refined cast and extensive compass, may well save me the trouble of any apology for thus beginning an epistolary intercourse. I have that esteem for every man of distinguished parts and an improved understanding, that I would find some way of recommending myself to such a person, though he were in the most distant corners of the earth³. The city I am now at, which rose upon the ruins of the ancient Nineveh, and was designed as much to eclipse that famed seat of the old Assyrian empire, as the glory and power of its founder did that of Ninus, would have engaged me to have come hither by choice, had it not lain so direct in the tour of my travels, especially at a time when the court being absent, I can more leisurely take a survey of its admirable curiosities. But Babylon need not be particularly described to

³ Herod. lib. i. c. 106. Ibid. c. 178.

thee, who hast been personally thyself in most of the noble metropolis's of this empire, among which the monarch of the world is pleased to divide his time. Never sure was any city built upon a more regular and magnificent plan; never was any better contrived for the healthfulness of its numerous inhabitants; so spacious are the streets, so large the outlets for gardens and walks of pleasure in the midst of every square of building; besides which, the houses stand so far asunder, that one cannot in this city complain of living more closely, or of breathing a less pure air, than if one were placed in the midst of the country; so truly does Babylon reconcile the two contrarieties of a town and a rural situation; and those vast plains, which were left unbuilt by the Assyrian king, are, to speak literally, a wide country, with champain, corn fields, and pasture, all enclosed within walls and fortresses. By the civility of ARTABAZUS the governor, I was shown the vast extent of this city in the most convenient manner upon the walls; and for the greater ease, we made a journey of two days in going round it. Could human strength have resisted the decrees of destiny, or of that over-ruling power, which governs the world, and had ordained for CYRUS the establishment of a glorious empire, it might have been thought, that this place of all others was impregnable, defended with gates of brass, and encompassed with these stupendous walls. But that which the Assyrian thought would complete the glory of his mighty works,
exposed

exposed the city to be taken; and those impassable morasses, which have overflowed the plains of Babylon, and spread over an unmeasurable tract of land, since the mounds of Pallacopas were blown up, upon CYRUS's turning the river into it, are a lasting monument of vain expense, designed to perpetuate his memory. It is reported that after NABUCHODROSOR had finished these magnificent works, he foresaw, to mortify his pride, and foretold by a prophetic spirit, that Babylon would be taken. The famous prophecy he uttered upon the occasion was written by the priests of Belus, and found long since in the archives of their temple. That famous structure was much damaged by XERXES; and stript of the rich statues of the Assyrian gods, and the sacred utensils; but the walls and towers are left standing, though not yet repaired, as was intended. My curiosity led me up one fine afternoon to the top of it; and it was with infinite surprise and pleasure I surveyed, in the ascent, the scene that presented itself below. As far as the eye could reach, appeared the most regular diversity of pomp and magnificence. Here a vast expanse of palaces, and stately buildings seemed to cover the whole plain beneath, and to terminate the wide

⁴ Abydenus ap. Euseb. Præp. l. 9. c. 41.

⁵ Arrian, lib. vii. dicit hoc templum a Xerxe subversum fuisse, sed Herodotus Xerxi diu superstes, cum in templi hujus mentionem incidit, habet hæc verba, Διὸς Βηλὸς ἱερὸν ἡαλιόπυλον, καὶ ἐς αἶμα τῆτο ἐπ' αὐόν. Clio. c. 181.

horizon, except where the distant waters of the great morass were just discernible by the reflection of the rays of the declining sun. Below me lay the remains of the ancient palace, which takes up four miles in circumference; and facing it, on the western banks of the river that superb new one, which exceeds all description, and stands upon twice the compass of ground with the former. There rose the gardens of AMYTIS, which seem to hang pendulous in air; nor does the strength of those arches (such is the exquisite contrivance of the work) appear as any support to the terraces and forests of the largest trees that are mounted above them. By the time we had reached the utmost summit, the cheerful glow of the setting sun began to grow fainter in the western clouds; but as the glorious prospect vanished underneath, from the distance and the dusk of the evening, another more beautiful broke out above in those myriads of twinkling lights, which diversify the heavens, in the absence of the radiant MITHRAS. We were then got up to the observatory, and found the sages in astronomy beginning their curious contemplations. They very courteously marked out to me a scheme of the heavens in the heavens themselves. 'Tis theirs to number the stars, and know them distinctly by their names; to observe when they rise and set, and to reduce their greatest wanderings to fixed and certain rules. Thus raised as it were betwixt earth and heaven, above the noise and tumult of human affairs, I fancied myself in

the neighbourhood of the celestial bodies, conversing with them, as they moved through the serene ether in their silent courses. How noble and stupendous beyond all the master-pieces of art did nature then appear! how immense and astonishing! how boundless and infinite! The thoughts that then swelled in my breast, are too big for utterance; I was dumb with rapture and amazement; I fell on my face and adored the everlasting OROMASDES. When compared with these his works, how mean are the most splendid glories of the Persian empire! how little and contemptible; they flatten — they diminish — they shrink into nothing!

From Babylon.

L.

LETTER XI.

CLEANDER to OTANES, *Superintendent of the Royal Palaces, etc.*

As soon as I am at leisure to turn my thoughts to any other concerns than those of the great king, thine (as this may serve to convince thee) are the uppermost in my mind. I have, as thou gavest me in charge, applied myself of late to the surveying of this renowned city, which is divided into two parts, the upper and lower. The upper, which is the more ancient, and was formerly the whole of it, is, in its present grandeur, almost entirely occupied by the public buildings, such as the citadel, the temples of the gods, and the courts of judicature:

the lower, which is guarded by a fort called Munychia, is laid out in an infinite number of streets, and communicates with the two havens, the Piræus and Phalereus, by two walls of most amazing strength, and more than forty stadia long; these and the citadel were built partly by CIMON, and partly by THEMISTOCLES. Some here scruple not to say, that the circumference of the whole is more than a day's journey, and even those who are most moderate affirm it to be above five parasangs; and doubtless, if one were to form a judgment of the strength and power of the Athenians from the state and magnificence of this metropolis, it would surpass all that has been reported of them. For to a Persian it would seem incredible, that the capital of a people, whose dominions exceed not in extent those of many an inferior satrap in the shining court, should equal in dimensions and grandeur the most sumptuous of those where the lord of Asia deigns to reside. For the ornamental parts, it is chiefly indebted to the care and genius of PERICLES; who, with a soul grasping at and capable of executing all things, thought it not enough to aggrandize the state, except he should at the same time adorn it equally; not content to make it the most powerful, he resolved also to make it the most beautiful city in Greece. By the encouragement and large rewards which he offered, he drew together the most celebrated artists in each kind from all parts of the world: their numbers soon inspired them with an emulation of excelling each other; and where all were excellent, it

was to lose reputation to produce any thing that was not perfect in its kind. Hence it is, potent lord, that it exceeds all power of words to express, or imagination to conceive, the beauties that are displayed in some of their principal buildings. Those dedicated to the gods especially might seem not unworthy of immortal natures; there is a grandeur, as well as a simplicity, which ravishes one at the first sight; they are all of them finished upon the most exquisite models; not blazing indeed with gold or precious stones, but polished with a care and delicacy, that would give value to the meanest materials, and that surpasses the brightest glow and the most diversified irradiations of color. That temple in particular, which is called the PARTHENON, and dedicated to MINERVA, the guardian and protectress of ATHENS, as it is the largest, so it is the most complete; its length is an hundred and fifty cubits, and the breadth about sixty-five: the outside adorned with a beautiful colonnade, which serves to support the bold projections of a most curious entablature. On entering and surveying the inside, I found myself delighted and surprised, without knowing the particular cause; till, on further consideration, I perceived that this was owing to the exact symmetry and happy adjustments of each part. I was convinced, that the proportions observed in this were the truest and most natural that can be; and will, if I foresee aright, be a pattern for imitation to all succeeding times. There is, there must be, something fixed and rational in this, as well as

all other objects of the mind. Why else do the stupendous works of Babylon, and the so celebrated temple of DIANA, which my native Ephesus boasts, though they amaze and awe, yet fail of pleasing us? And whence is it that, though none but the most consummate artist is capable of designing what is truly great and majestic, yet all admire and approve what is so, when finished? Happy? PERICLES, whose name shall live, not in these august buildings only, but in all which deserve the admiration of mankind to the latest posterity! It was from a sense of this, that he silenced the clamors of his enemies, and put a stop to the complaints of his fellow-citizens, in relation to the great charge of these edifices. He offered to pay the expense of all that was done, on condition that he might have the reputation of designing and raising so many illustrious monuments. Besides this, the most remarkable temples are those dedicated to NEPTUNE to CASTOR and POLLUX, and THESEUS; nor can it fail to give every Persian the same pleasure it did me, when he shall know, that another of their most stately buildings, the Odeum or music theatre, is built after the model of that pavilion which shades the sacred head of the most powerful monarch in the universe. It would be endless to recount the other buildings, which rise on all sides around me; nor will I attempt at present to describe the fine paintings, or enumerate the beautiful statues, which people, as it were, every corner of the city. These are all done under the direction, and most of

them by the hand of PHIDIAS, an artist so extraordinary, as to be worthy the encouragement of our great monarch, and who, when supported by his munificence, might exceed all that the world has ever seen in that way; and yet this so excellent a master has lately, out of spite to PERICLES his patron, been cast into prison, and is suffered to languish there in daily expectation of death. Such is the reward of all his labors from an ungrateful city! Thou art happy, OTANES, in serving a master who will not value thee less because thou deservest to be valued more. Let it be thy ambition to render those splendid apartments, committed to thy care, worthy of their royal guest; and if the Athenians scruple not to imitate the Asiatic barbarians (as they insolently call us) in one of their buildings, nor do thou disdain to transcribe other excellencies from them. Blush not to copy after masters, whose natural bent and genius lie towards these arts; who, despising all useless ostentation, and laughing at the cumbrous unformed buildings of the East, have first showed the world, "that convenience is not incompatible with state, nor true magnificence destitute of real use." Adieu!

From Athens.

R.

LETTER XII.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS, one of the seven
Counsellors of State to the King of Persia.

IT was no inconsiderable part of the wise instructions which thou gavest me, before my voyage to this city, that I should write you a particular account of every remarkable custom, as well as extraordinary incident that occurred during my abode here. I know how much thou grievest in secret for the degeneracy of Persia; and thy design requiring this intelligence, with a view to the improvement of our own country by remarks on the manners of others, is agreeable to the wisdom of thy ministry, and the greatness of thy soul. A design truly glorious, and praise-worthy! in comparison whereof, the history of the vast armies and ravages of XERXES may be considered as the chaff before the wind, and which will perpetuate the name of MEGABYZUS to the latest posterity.

The Athenians have a law amongst them, which enjoins that all those who die fighting in the cause of their country, shall at the end of every campaign be buried at the public charge, and their children maintained by the state till they arrive at the age of manhood. The first year of the war is now over, and the winter season is advanced upon us. Accordingly, the ceremonies thus instituted were

performed a few days since; and I had the pleasure of seeing every part of them. To tell thee my opinion freely, I never was so much delighted with the pomp and splendor of the court of Susa, as with the honest plainness of these republican solemnities. The whole was conducted after this manner.

About three days before the funeral, the bones of the slain were placed in a tent raised on purpose, so that every person might have an opportunity to frequent them, and pay them the last tribute of a tear. All sorts of odoriferous herbs and flowers were strewed around the tent; and each man brought some in his hand, that he might consecrate them to the manes of his favorite friend. On the fourth day a coffin of cypress was sent from every tribe, to carry off the bones of their own members. After which went an empty covered hearse, in memory of those who could not be found. The procession was carried on with a peculiar decency of sorrow, while great numbers of inhabitants, both strangers and citizens, assisted in the train of mourners. The parents of the deceased attended at the sepulchre to weep. No eye could refrain from tears; and the melancholy distress which appeared in the faces of all alike, seemed but a true copy of the sentiments of all. The bones were accompanied in this manner to the public place of burial, (which is situated in a pleasant spot without the city, called CERAMICUS,) and committed to the ground. The monument erected to the valor of these citizens was adorned with pillars, trophies, and inscriptions,

such as are usual about the tombs of the most honorable persons. The ceremony was concluded with one speech in praise of them all, and PERICLES was the orator to whom that task was assigned. It is impossible for any man, who has not heard him, to conceive the strength and solidity of his thoughts, the grace and dignity of his action, the elegance and simplicity of his diction. For my own part, I was enchanted with the power of his eloquence. His countrymen say of him very justly, that he harangues in an imperial strain. Hence they have given him the surname of OLYMPUS, intimating, probably, that, like their god JUPITER, he thunders when he speaks. To this I may add, that the melody of his voice, the air of his countenance, the very manner of his dress, has something of an engaging and commanding gravity, which at once charms and astonishes his audience.

The main scope of his speech, was to animate the living with resolution, by commending the courage of the dead; to infuse a spirit of patriotism into the minds of his fellow-citizens, by celebrating that principle of action, which incites the valiant to battle. He told them, that such men, though they failed in their attempt, were not wanting in glory to themselves or their country; that they would forever receive, instead of their lives, an immortal monument of praise (not so much that wherein their bodies are now laid, as a more illustrious one in the memory of future ages). For to men of fame, all the earth is a sepulchre,

and respect shall be paid to their virtue, not only by inscriptions and trophies at home; but by unwritten records of the heart in all nations of the world, which, more than any kind of perishable monument, will remain to eternity. In imitation, therefore, of these men, continued he, and placing happiness in liberty, and liberty in valor, be forward to encounter the dangers of war. He set before them the reputation of dying with their swords in their hands, for a commonwealth so renowned and so noble as that of Athens. In displaying the extent and greatness of its dominion, he took occasion to flatter the people, in ascribing it chiefly to the prudence of their conduct, the strictness of their discipline, and the bravery of their arms. He extolled the freedom and independency of their constitution; that they were all governed by the law, whose protection was equally extended to the poor and the rich, to the weak as well as powerful; that the merit and industry of every citizen made his way to preferment, without any personal distinction whatsoever; in short, that where the rewards of virtue are the greatest, there live the greatest men. He closed his speech with a particular address to the different ages and sexes of those who heard him, and dismissed the multitude.

As soon as PERICLES had descended from the rostra, the people followed him to his house with loud acclamations of joy; and the sense of every man's sorrow for the loss of his relations was changed into the highest encomiums

on their happiness and fame. The merits of the deceased were drawn in the most lively colors by the partial imaginations of friends. Even those who had been their competitors in the posses of glory, and had envied their reputation while living, now honor them with affection when dead. Each man seems studious of serving the widows and orphans of those he loved; and the state of Athens, with the tenderness of a kind parent, is expressing those sentiments of gratitude to the offspring of her brave defenders, which she cannot express to themselves; a custom so just and laudable, so consistent with the wisest maxims of good policy, that it must be left to your judgment to determine, if the constitution of Persia is not in some degree defective for the want of it. Pardon the vehemence of the expression; but this I will venture to affirm, that nothing can tend, in a stronger manner, to animate the soft and degenerate troops of Asia to emulate the valor of their generous ancestors, than rewards and encouragements of the same nature, proposed to military virtue. Herein then let us imitate the republic of Athens, and be in no wise ashamed to learn useful improvements from the warmest of our foes. I would ask only one question; Can any man, who shall chance to fall a victim to his enemies in the heat of battle, and considers, in his last and departing moments, that his obsequies shall be honorably performed at the charge of his fellow-citizens, that his friends shall pay respect to his memory by their praise, that his children shall be

educated by the care and prudence of the public; can such a man hesitate one moment, whether he hath done rightly in forfeiting his life, however precious, to the fame of his own character, to the service of his own children, to the general and lasting benefit of his country?

This is a custom, O thou sage MEGABYZUS, which, if ever it be practised among us, will establish the throne of our mighty master, not on the frail and unstable foundations of pomp and luxury, of force and power, of dissimulation and craft; but on the popularity of the prince, and the industry and affection of his subjects; foundations of the regal authority so great and so noble, that the king, who would add weight to his sceptre, must reign by them, or govern against the happiness of his people, against the very rule, the very end of his government. Adieu.

From Athens.

C.

LETTER XIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe to*
ARTAXERXES *King of Persia.*

I FORGOT not, sage minister, the directions thou gavest me, to send accounts of the constitutions of the different governments in Greece; and now the season of action is over, I find more leisure to prosecute such useful inquiries. I intend in this letter to lay before thee a description of the constitution of Athens, reducing

it to a compass consistent, I hope, with accuracy, as well as entertainment.

SOLON, their great legislator, formed their government chiefly on a popular plan; though from several institutions of his it appears, that he designed to moderate the inconstancy and violence of a democracy, by introducing a proper mixture of the aristocratical form. The first appointed, that none but those who had a certain revenue should be candidates for the great magistracies of the state. The people, indeed, since the Persian invasion, have had influence enough to increase their power, by getting rid of this encumbrance upon the ambition of the poorer sort. The second was, the establishment of a senate, chosen annually out of each of the tribes. SOLON, as a third restraint upon the people, a third anchor to prevent the republic's being carried away by the intrigues of factious rulers, or the irresolution of weak ones, enlarged the authority of the Areopagus, their great court of judicature. He likewise very much diminished the power of the nine archons, who have each separate jurisdictions; as the first, for instance, gives a name to the year, determines in causes concerning wills and legacies, and inspects the theatrical diversions.

After this general sketch of the Athenian constitution, I shall proceed to enter more particularly into the grand resorts and springs, on which the movements of their political system depend. The senate of five hundred is composed of fifty out of every one of the ten

tribes. No one can be admitted into it, without being at least thirty years of age, and undergoing a strict inquiry into his character. Before he takes his seat he binds himself by a solemn oath to adhere to the laws, and give advice to the people of Athens, according to the best of his abilities. Every tribe presides in the senate in its turn (which is regulated by lot) for thirty-five days. Each company of presidents are called Prytanes; and out of them the Proedroi, or set of presidents for the week, are appointed. The president of the day called the Epistata, is one of the Proedroi, and has in his custody the great seal, and the keys of the citadel and treasure, and presides likewise in the assemblies of the people. When the senate has made a decree, if it is ratified by the people, it passes into a law; if otherwise it continues in force only for a year. The matters which come under the cognizance of the senate are of the same sort as those which are brought before the people; and therefore may be referred to that head. At the expiration of the annual offices of the senators, if any ships of war have been built during their regency, the people decree them the honor of the crown; a remarkable instance of their great attention to increase their naval force; as being fully convinced that the safety and honor of the commonwealth depend upon it! The ordinary assemblies of the people are held four times in thirty-five days, particular affairs being allotted to each time; extraordinary ones are summoned by the magistrates; and a paper is fixed up in

the public places of the city, with a short account of the business to be debated.

The place where the assembly is held, which is either the market-place, or a great square near the citadel, is first purified by a solemn rite of lustration. When that is ended, the public crier makes a prayer for the prosperity of their counsels; and pronounces an execration against those who endeavour, or advise any thing to the prejudice of the commonwealth. Then, by order of the president, he states the question; or repeats the decree of the senate, which is to be confirmed or rejected. The oldest orators begin the debate, and are followed by the younger; though it is to be observed, that no person under thirty has a right to be heard; nor is any one who has been convicted of a notorious crime permitted to have a share in their councils. Without the first of these precautions, they think the state might be exposed to danger by an immature advice; without the latter, by a desperate or unlawful one. When the debates are over the people give their votes, which is usually done by holding up their hands: then the opinion is drawn up in writing, and they confirm it by a second division. After the president has examined the numbers on both sides, he pronounces on which the majority lies, and dismisses the assembly. It is in these assemblies of the people that all affairs relating to war and peace, religion or domestic policy, are discussed. Appeals lie to them from all tribunals, even from that of the Areopagus; of which

which venerable judicature I shall next give thee a short account. Their institution is by some attributed to Solon, but generally to Cecrops the founder of the city. It is chiefly composed of the Archons who have discharged their offices with honor; and its number therefore is not always the same. They hold their sittings on Mars's-hill, in the open air; and when they determine causes it is in the night. The members of this body have been always held in the highest esteem for the sanctity of their lives, the impartiality of their decisions, and their knowledge in the laws of their country. Their authority is of a large extent; they inspect over the observation of the laws, the manners of the citizens, and the education of the youth. They have also cognizance of cases of murder and all sorts of impieties; and the introduction of new ceremonies fall within their jurisdiction. PERICLES, indeed, with a view of making his court to the people, by throwing more power into their hands, and weakening that of the nobles, has reduced the power of the Areopagus: but sober men look upon it as one of the worst steps in his administration; and it affords his enemies a fair topic for invidious remarks. I hope the view I have here given thee, noble scribe, of the nature of the Athenian constitution, and of their manner of carrying on public business, will not be disagreeable to thee, or afford unprofitable reflections to the council of Persia; thy favorable acceptance of this essay will encourage me to transmit more papers of the same kind. I leave it to thy experienced

sagacity to compare the republican government of Athens with the monarchical one of thy native country; to discover the excellencies of each; to trace out their respective imperfections; and to determine, whether a constitution, blended of both, might not compose the most perfect form that human invention can ever expect to attain. But I know how difficult it would prove to hit that just medium; and how hard it is to prevent the spirit of faction from mixing with that of reformation. Pardon my presumption, and suffer me to wish a long continuance to thy ministry; it is the same thing as wishing an increase of honor and prosperity to Persia. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

L E T T E R X I V.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

THOU continuest, CLEANDER, to give frequent proofs of thy zeal and abilities in the dispatches which thou writest to the ministers of the Persian court. Our royal master is happy in possessing so good a servant, particularly at a time when the wisdom of our counsels must assist us to regain what we have lost by the misfortunes of our arms. Thy last letters to MEGABYZUS and myself were particularly acceptable. They show that, not contented with being a bare annalist of the public transactions,

thou enterest into the very genius and dispositions of the people amongst whom thou residest; and that as thou conversest with persons the most intelligent in the government and manners of Athens, so thou art no less careful to enrich thy country with the fruits of thy knowledge. I will only suggest this caution to thee, not to suffer the partial representations which the Greeks make of their own policy and religion, to inspire thee with a dislike to those of Persia; nor let the many instances, which thou must observe, of a licentious liberty towards magistrates and rulers, pervert thy affections from the sovereign of the East; neither imagine that customs which suit the level conditions of the members of a republic, would equally become the gravity and strict discipline of a monarchy. Whatever informations thou canst acquire relating to the trade, revenues, or marine of Athens, her religious ceremonies or civil institutions, will not fail to recommend thy diligence to a prince, whose goodness never forgets the meanest labors of his servants, and whose generosity takes every opportunity of rewarding them. As an earnest of what thou mayst expect, he sends thee, by this courier, a ring sparkling with a precious stone taken out of the royal treasury, two Median horses with rich carapisons, and a purse of five hundred golden darics. Receive this regal munificence with gratitude; and prove by thy services, that thou art not unworthy so great a mark of confidence and favor. It remains for me to inform thee, that several councils were lately held on Grecian

affairs; in which it was debated, whether the great king should immediately offer his mediation by a solemn embassy to the Athenians and the Peloponnesian allies; or whether he should suffer the war to continue, till both sides were further weakened, and the losing party reduced to make application to us. The latter measure has, I think, with good reason, been chosen. It was considered, that it seems more for the honor of Persia not to enter into these affairs uninvited, and perhaps expose her mediation to contempt. Besides, there is some danger, that if we discover our intentions too early, the natural jealousies of the Greeks with regard to us, may be awakened; a sense of their mutual interests may prevail over the spirit of dissension and tumult, which now reigns among them; and so the game be played out of our hands, through our own want of dexterity in managing it. Whereas, by delaying to open the part which Persia designs to take in these differences, the alarm which Sparta has conceived at the rising greatness of Athens is so great, that the war is likely to continue and grow hotter every year. The conquering party will increase in their pretensions; the vanquished, exasperated by their losses, unwilling to yield to those who were formerly their equals, and unable to defend themselves, can have no where recourse for assistance but to us; and thus the balance must naturally be placed in our hands, and the Grecian states, diverted from making conquests over us, will voluntarily sue for protection against their powerful

neighbours, to a country which they formerly despised and hated. But I forbear insisting upon the advantages arising to Persia from this conduct, it is every way so agreeable to her true interests, that it would be doubting thy judgment to enforce it by farther arguments.

Advice from Lacedæmon assures us, that the leading men among the allies are determined before the end of the year to send a formal embassy to the great king, requesting that he would enter into the league, and furnish them with supplies of men and money. Fail not to advertise, whether the Athenians have notice of this; and whether they have any intention to follow an example so glorious for Persia.

Before I conclude this dispatch, I am to acquaint thee, by the king's express order, that he is sensible, in case the plague breaks out at Athens, (as it is reported,) of the dangers to which thou must be exposed in a city not able to contain its numerous inhabitants, whose present inconveniencies so terrible a distress will necessarily increase; and therefore he thinks it proper for thee to remove to a place which may be free from that calamity, and at the same time not far from Athens. Thus neither will thy own safety be exposed, nor at the same time the king's service receive any detriment.

When thou readest this instance of royal tenderness for an useful minister, and receivest the marks of princely bounty which accompany it, thou hast reason to thank the mighty OROMASDES, that thou art born a subject of

Persia, and livest under the reign of ARTAXERXES.

From Susa.

P.

LETTER XV.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

HEARING of the messenger that was to set out to you from GOBRYAS, I would not omit the opportunity it offers me of expressing the concern I am under for your safety; the latest reports from Greece having informed us, that they begin to be under dismal apprehensions of the plague at Athens. It is said, that the cattle^o, as they graze in the meads adjacent to that city, are seized with the noxious vapors ascending from the earth, and fall instantaneously dead; the sure and common presage that the same calamity will soon extend itself to the human species. I could wish, therefore, you were removed farther from the contagion: May at least those propitious beings, who, under the great OROMASDES, are the guardians of our state, preserve the faithful minister of the great king, even amidst the regions of death. I wish you were safe at Susa, could the interests of ARTAXERXES be served so well by any other person less valuable to all his friends. Whilst we enjoy the clemencies of a mild and wholesome air, thou

οὐρανὸς μὲν πρῶτον ἐκώχλητο. Iliad. vi.

in a rough and unpleasant country, exposed to the rigors of a northern sky, art not only placed amidst tumults, depopulations, and the alarms of war, but art exposed to evils which no human forecast can ward against; all which thou bearest most willingly for the service of Persia. Excellent CLEANDER! what reward will not thy merit call for? May some happy day restore thee to thy friends and country, where MEGABYZUS, who knows thy worth, will raise thee to distinguished honors, and place thee in some tranquil station under the smiles of our mighty sovereign. That great minister knows so well to allay the boisterous swellings and animosities of contending interests, that peace and unanimity seem now entirely to prevail over faction and discord; and may they long continue undisturbed by the seditious efforts of envy and ambition, in the Persian court! A sense too of duty to the supreme being seems more fervent upon our minds than usual; though were we ever so forgetful of it at other times, our late deliverances would strongly have demanded it from us at this. And here it may not be unentertaining to mention to thee, with what religious care a solemn festival was celebrated thereupon at Susa. Forty days were set apart for feasts and sacrifices; during that time the court put on an extraordinary air of splendor and cheerfulness; but there were none of those looser revels, which commonly attend an excess of rejoicing. The most eminent of the Magi, from all the colleges in Persia, were summoned to be present at

the sacrifices. The first morning the chief of the Magi, with a long train of his associates, and the several ministers of the religious ceremonies following him, ascended the highest of the mountains that environ Susa to the north; clad in the sacred vestments, his ⁸ tiara interwoven with myrtle. He bowed twice towards the rising sun; then led the victim to the appointed ground, and there invoked the god. ARTAXERXES and the queen, XERXES, SOGDIANUS, OCHUS, and ARSITES, with all the other princes of the blood, were present at these holy rites. Each of the Magi sung oraisons in their turn to the great author of the world. But ARIMASPES, as chief in dignity, had justly the preference given him of hymning the praise of OROMASDES the best. "How, at his great command, the wide expanse was filled with beings; how, at his word, the bright and radiant sun first spread his gilded rays to cheer and gladden nature; how the elements were disposed by him, and the seeds of all things ranged in order; how, by his power, they are preserved, and made the principles of life and vegetation to all creatures, which if he withheld his salutary influences, would swarm at once with death and contagion; how, by him alone, the subtle fleeces of the air are kept untainted, and the earth free from impurities and infection: hence that the whole expanse is God, since he pervades the whole, and by his power is present,

⁷ Herod. Clío. c. 131. ⁸ Ibid. c. 132.

“every where.” The song being ended, you might have seen the awful lord of Asia prostrate on the earth, acknowledging a much higher power; a power upon whom he and all the princes of the earth depend. The inferior Magi sacrificed in their order, according to their different institutions; and joined at last in one general symphony of praise, while a hundred victims lost their breath, to the eternal source of good. It was glorious to observe the long procession as it ascended up the steep; but more so, to behold the vast retinue and splendid equipages spreading over the summits of the highest hills; the sparkling ensigns of regality; the stately canopy blazing with the gems of Indus; the rich caparisons of the camels and horses; and then to see the mightiest satraps, together with their potent lord, descend from their seats of state, bowing themselves all at once before the greater sovereign of the universe. When this solemn ceremony was ended, the whole company returned in the same regular order in which they went. The procession entered the spacious enclosure of the royal palace at the gate of Memnon, where a sumptuous entertainment was prepared. The king himself sat at one table with the princes of the blood, waited upon by the great officers of the household: at another, the most considerable satraps, and the generals of the army: at a third, the venerable body of the Magi; and at others, through the several stately apartments of the palace, the inhabitants of Susa. During the entertainment the halls resounded

with the melodious airs of women, and the enchanting strains of the most skilful musicians. Nothing could be added to the splendor, order, and variety that appeared on this occasion. Thy friends wanted thee alone to complete their satisfaction. This only consolation remains to them, that by undergoing a few temporary inconveniencies, thou art in the highest degree useful to thy king and thy country. Adieu. **L.**

From Susa.

End of the first Year of the War.

A. M. 3574. Third Year of the 87th Olympiad.

The second Year of the Peloponnesian War.

LETTER XVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, Chief Scribe to
ARTAXERXES King of Persia.

I RECEIVED the dispatch which thou sentest me by the courier HYDARNES; and acknowledge myself highly honored, that I am thought worthy to partake in the secret counsels of our great monarch, as well as sensibly affected by the signal generosity and tenderness which he shows for his faithful slave. I prostrate myself before the footstool of his shining throne, and wish him length of days; a blessing which is sure to give perpetuity to the happiness of Persia, and the only one that remains to be added to the wisdom of his government, the greatness of his soul, and the princely benevolence of his temper.

I obeyed the command laid upon me to retire during the height of the plague, and have found an hospitable retreat in the island of Salamis; but I fear, though my own safety is less endangered, I shall be necessarily slower in executing the king's orders, and transmitting accounts of Grecian affairs. If any delay should happen, I hope it will not be imputed to my negligence, but to the inconveniencies

of the times, and the difficulty of procuring intelligence here, through the caution of the magistrates.

Just before the plague broke out, the Peloponnesian army, under the command of ARCHIDAMUS king of Sparta, made a second invasion into Attica; they are now marched towards the mountain Larius, where the Athenians have silver mines. I believe the plan of the war will not be different from that of the last year; and this dreadful calamity takes away the flower of their citizens and soldiers, and so dispirits the rest, that PERICLES does not think it prudent to hazard the issue of a battle. In order, however, to make a diversion, a squadron of a hundred galleys is preparing to put to sea, which he intends to command himself. His enemies incense the people against him, (who were never more harassed and uneasy,) by saying, that the vast numbers he drew out of the country last year increase the contagion of the distemper. I gave the reasons of that measure in a former letter; and cannot help saying, that it is highly unjust and unfair to charge him with all those cross accidents of fortune which the most refined human prudence and forecast cannot prevent. It seems as unreasonable as to assert, that the plague is owing to his contrivance. By going admiral in person, he either intends to preserve his credit and keep up the spirits of his countrymen by some remarkable exploit, or else to withdraw himself from the clamors of

his enemies, till the fury of the disease is a little abated.

The resemblance of the symptoms shows, that the plague is of the same strange nature as that which began in Ethiopia and Egypt, and afterwards ravaged the Persian provinces.

Every other sickness turns immediately to this, which generally kills in seven or eight days, after great pains and eruptions in all parts of the body, insatiate thirst, want of sleep, and variety of circumstances, which increase the natural terrors and uneasiness of death. It is very remarkable, that none who recover are ever seized with it a second time; yet even in some of these it strikes upon their senses, effaces the memory of all passages of their lives, and makes them forget their nearest relations. What is most surprising, is that no certain remedies can be applied: a medicine that does good to one, is hurtful to another; and the care and closest attendance of the physician are as useless, as the utmost efforts of his art.

The air itself partakes of the malignity; the birds drop down, as they fly along the streets; and the dead bodies, for want of interment, share the same sepulchre with the brutes, and are cast out in the public streets, so many loathsome and moving spectacles of mortality. The greatest part of the inhabitants of the country, who for want of other accommodations were forced to dwell in booths and huts set up in the public places, are liable to the greatest inconveniencies. The living and the

dead amongst them lie confused in heaps, some in the agonies of death, others lifting up their hands to heaven, and imploring the divine assistance, and many gasping round the fountains, where they crowd to quench their thirst. Nay, what is almost incredible, a neglect of religion and the laws is introduced by the prevalence of this calamity; of the former, because they see the plague destroys alike the pious and the wicked; of the latter, because no one expects his life will last till legal justice overtakes him. Indeed nothing contributes more to the disorderly condition they are in, than the want of proper regulations for removing and attending the sick, and burning the dead: and were they of an humor to submit to any thing like restraint, it might preserve them from the confusion and misery they now undergo. Such is the dismal state of affairs at Athens; to which no small relief is brought by the arrival of HIPPOCRATES the famous Coan physician; who is determined, though at the hazard of his life, to devote himself entirely to the service of the diseased. This generosity has so sensibly affected the people of Athens, that they resolve to bestow on him some illustrious mark of their esteem and favor. I need not mention, that they honor him the more, for having refused the munificent offers of the great king, that he might be quite at liberty when Greece demanded his assistance.

I can assure thee, that the Athenians have no information yet of the Peloponnesian embassy; but PERICLES has agents in all parts, who will

not fail to give him early notice of it. There is a remarkable story of him, that, upon giving in his accounts once to the people, in an article of fifteen talents no particular service was specified. His enemies taking the advantage, immediately insisted he should explain it; to which he replied very readily, that this sum was employed on a service of great importance, which it was absolutely necessary to keep secret. The people were satisfied, and made no farther inquiry. It is generally supposed, that these fifteen talents were laid out at Sparta, to keep off a war, till the Athenians were better prepared for it. The Lacedæmonians have a fine opportunity, if they make the best use of this campaign; but I am told they are discontented with ARCHIDAMUS their general, who declared himself openly against the war, and is unwilling to engage his state too far in it. Besides, nothing considerable can be done against the Athenians by land, and they always have a good fleet at sea, to guard their coasts, interrupt the commerce of their enemies, and prevent the defection of their allies. I send thee inclosed a list of the allies on both sides, and the contributions they furnish towards the war. The Athenians are absolute masters over theirs, whereas the separate interests amongst the Peloponnesians embarrass their military operations for want of unanimity. Excuse, potent minister, the dismal scene of death and desolation, which I set before thee in the former part of this dispatch; but I might justly have been esteemed insensible, if the little I

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saw myself, and the large accounts I received from others, had made only a transient impression. Compassion is a common tribute to the miseries and infirmities which human nature is exposed to; and a generous mind like thine pays it willingly to the worst of its foes. Much more then let the humblest servant of ARTAXERXES, the faithful CLEANDER, claim some share of pity in his hazardous situation. But he repines not at his fate; he should think it honorable to perish in the service of his master. He is thankful to OROMASDES for the life he still enjoys, and refers the uncertain events of futurity to his over-ruling will. Adieu.

From Salamis.

P.

Allies of The Athenians.

The Chians, Lesbians, Platæans, Corcyræans, most of the Acarnanians, Messenians, &c.

Allies of the Lacedæmonians.

All Peloponnesus, except Argos and Achaia; the Megareans, Phocians, Locrians, Bœotians, Ambraciots, Leucadians, and Anactorians.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

WERE the sweetest retirement a sufficient asylum from care, the Magi would be exempted from those reflections, which prey upon the minds of unhappy mortals. We inhabit those groves, which have been the mansions of the wise and virtuous by the appointment of ZOROASTRES, who blessed them with his abode; and whose memory still warms our breasts with a noble enthusiasm. We point out in our pleased imagination the paths he trod, and the places he took most delight in: here, say we, within the spacious arch of this cave he penn'd his divine precepts; on the slope of yonder hill, or under the shade of that ancient cedar, he repos'd himself, and while his eyelids shut out the piercing light, his soul was open to the milder influence of OROMASDES. He held an intercourse with the heavenly bodies from the summit of this pyramid, or of that mount, whose sides are covered with odorous shrubs, that scarcely afford a perplexed path to its top. The very air of this country is perfumed and of a purer draught; the sky more serene and of a brighter azure; the prospects beautiful and various, since nature is not only favorable to us, but has received all the improvement she was capable of, without being disguised by art. Immense wealth has been bestowed on her cultivation, yet the

richness of her dress seems to arise from the genius of the place. You are surprised at the elegance that appears, yet can see nothing but what bears a resemblance to something you have observed in rude nature ; like a mistress of a well-ordered family, though she receives you with the utmost delicacy and magnificence, it is with that ease, that she seems not to be at any trouble, or to have been put out of her ordinary course for your entertainment.

Yet I must confess, amidst these delightful scenes, sacred to peace and the contemplation of everlasting OROMASDES, I am not without some anxiety for your safety, O CLEANDER! when I consider your hazardous situation for the service of Persia, and your zeal for that monarch, who outshines all his predecessors in justice, who will not fail to reward the success, which your zeal and penetration promise to our affairs. Your steady affection has gained you much confidence with the great, and your perfect knowledge of the language, interests, and politics of our enemies, no less than those of Persia, give great assurance to your friends, that you shall one day be recalled from your obscurity to be raised high in the court of Susa. Your merit to your country will meet with other recompence than the jealousy of Greece generally affords her benefactors. The sovereign of the East is too generous to suspect rivalry in his faithful servants, and will look upon the influence you shall gain in the states of Greece, as the greatest testimony of your fidelity.

I sometimes reflect on the worst that can befall you, from the prying discernment of the people you converse with, or those who are jealous of your credit at the court; but the sagacity of your prince will guard you from your domestic foes; and should the popular violence of Athens make itself accountable for your death, Asia would pour forth its numerous troops to revenge so base an indignity to the servant of ARTAXERXES. Perhaps you will think this lofty strain proceeds more from the zeal of a Persian, than my true sentiments, since we have experienced that a numerous army, nay I might say numerous nations in arms, have been found unequal to the slender but well-conducted power of those smaller states; our soldiers have been distressed and scattered, though equal in number to all the inhabitants of Greece. But may I not hope, CLEANDER, that that insinuating evil, luxury, the parent of all our shame and misfortunes, has at last found a place amongst our enemies? Has not security, the result of success, relaxed their severe morals, and introduced emasculating pleasures, to which alone they are obliged for the advantages they gained over us? Are not these the Grecian refinements we hear so much of? Does not that boasted superiority in arts and politeness (from whence they brand all the world with the name of Barbarians) break out into extravagancy of dress, diet, and deportment? And has not by this time the unrestrained populace, intoxicated with victory, mistaken licentiousness for liberty? Or is it

possible, that a people so free and so successful should continue upon their guard against these worst of foes? No certainly, CLEANDER, the Persian luxury must be part of their acquisitions, which, like the fatal pestilence that occasioned such desolation in this empire, passed through Asia into Greece, and now preys upon our foes, must take its last residence with them; a disease more destructive than the pestilence, and which will baffle the skill of that haughty Coan physician, who, had he more lives than ever his art preserved, would deserve to forfeit them all in tortures for his insolence to the world's greatest monarch. I need not tell you, (what I doubt not is the boast of every Greek,) that when he was conjured to pass over into Asia, by a promise of that friendship which princes sue for, and to share in that wealth which is the tribute of three hundred provinces, he answered disdainfully, he would not desert his country to serve a Barbarian. Shame to the kingdom of Cyrus, that his successors, before whom the mighty satraps prostrate themselves to the earth, and whose name is awful to half mankind, should become the scorn of an ignoble Coan! But the Almighty has punished him, by transferring that evil on his own country, which he refused to suppress in Persia; which may teach us, that the worshippers of OROMASDES are not forsaken, since, though he has denied success to our arms, he has himself chastised the insolence of our foes.

From Balch in Badria.

H.

LETTER XVIII

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

I HAVE been informed of thy rising character not only from the chamberlain HYDASPES, but the common voice of fame; and am the more confirmed in the just expectations I had conceived of thee, from the late honor of thy letter. The wisest legislators of Greece have generally made it one of their excellent laws, that the young men should pay respect to the sage instructions of their elders. But surely, if this maxim may at any time be set aside, it ought never to be more reversed than in our correspondence. For when I consider the lustre of thy parts, and the reach of thy knowledge, at a time of life which brings few even to the exercise of reason; I amuse myself with the agreeable thoughts of profiting by thy information; far, very far from imagining, that any thing which falls from CLEANDER can be of service to ORSAMES. However, as I shall always be proud to show every mark of regard to a nobleman of your quality and hopes, I can assure thee, generous lord, that I think myself highly honored by the particu- lar and distinguishing proof, thou hast granted me, of thy favor.

It is with the utmost satisfaction I observe, how much thou canst disdain the ostentation and luxury of the Persian nobility; and rather employest thyself in the useful pursuits of knowledge, than wanderest in the destructive

path of intoxicating pleasure. To say the truth, when I reflect on this particular, I admire thee for anticipating the experience without the infirmity of years, and moderating the fever of youth without losing the true spirit of it. Thou hast made it thy business, from the very earliest days of thy infancy, to acquaint thyself with the religion, laws, and constitution of thy country; and art now travelling through other regions, to survey the temper, customs, and policy of those who differ from us. Thy epistle from Babylon is sufficient to convince me, thou art well qualified, from thy curiosity and eagerness, to procure the exactest intelligence; from thy judgment and discretion, to select the most interesting circumstances; from thy ingenuity and good sense, to relate them in the most accurate manner; from thy prudence and sagacity, to draw the best and most rational inferences from them all. I am extremely impatient to learn a few particulars of that extraordinary people the Egyptians; who inhabit a country, as remarkable for the polity of its laws, the wisdom of its religion, and the knowledge of its priests, as for the trade of its cities, the grandeur of its buildings, and the fertility of its soil. When thou enterest into that storehouse of wealth and commerce, (for so it may be termed with justice,) that repository of all sacred and profane science, thou wilt be wrapt in pleasure and astonishment, at the variety, not to say profusion, of blessings, which art and nature have poured out, for the subsistence,

convenience, and ornament of that happy nation. A man of thy understanding will find a secret delight in tracing out the steps of the great heroes of antiquity; he will be studious of searching into the annals of their story, and will meet with no small entertainment in hearing of the victories and military virtue of SESOSTRIS, or the peaceful arts and government of OSIRIS. He will listen with attention to the philosophical precepts and dark oracles of the priests; he will investigate the long records of lunar years, and unveil the mysterious system of astronomy, and frame of nature, with much labor and toil. He will visit their public edifices, and the palaces of their kings, with admiration; and behold the temples of their gods with reverential regard. Those stupendous works of antiquity, which still exist there, can by no means escape the prying curiosity of his soul, or the careful diligence of his inquiries. He will view the pyramids and mausoleums, which have been preserved entire through a long course of centuries, the wonder of the world, with speculations of a moral kind. He will look upon them, as erected by the most powerful princes of the earth for a memorial of their pride to future ages, and as intended rather for an amazing spectacle to the living, than as places of repose to the dead. He will consider, that the founders of those monuments closed up the last scene of their false greatness in life, by raising these altars to their vanity: and gave in death an example to mankind of the extreme littleness of mortal arrogance, by mingling

their own dust with so poor a share of that earth, which once was not sufficient to contain them.

The next period of thy journey leads thee into Greece, a country very different from that of Egypt, both in the qualities of its climate, and the manners of its people. Instead of the splendor and magnificence, which appears in the cities of the latter, thou wilt find a general turn to parsimony and frugality among the inhabitants of the former. Instead of the peace and unanimity, which exists under a monarchical government, the popular frame of the Grecian republics is continually shaken by domestic faction. Athens, through the extent and abundance of her trade, the industry and œconomy of her people, the wisdom and courage of the great men she has produced, hath for many years born the principal sway in their counsels. But the states of Peloponnesus, somewhat envious of her authority, have at length determined to destroy it. A violent pestilence, and a strong opposition to the measures of PERICLES, their chief adviser in this war, are at the same time broke out among the citizens. PERICLES, with no other restraint on the caprice of his countrymen, than what his own discretion can command, withstands the clamors of party, and the stoutest efforts of sedition. However, he cannot hold it long; for I easily conjecture, from the present posture of affairs, that his enemies will never leave him, till they have wrested the reins of power from his hands. But more

of this, when I shall enjoy the honor of thy company and conversation in the town of Athens, which is the place of my residence and business.

In the mean time give me leave to say, that I wish the improvement thou receivest from thy travels, may be equal to thy laudable thirst after knowledge: at least I know the result of them will, one day, be applied to the glory and security of our sovereign and the Persian empire. Thus, instead of meanly depending on the noble actions of thy ancestors, as the only merit thou canst boast, thy reputation will be as much superior to theirs, as thy virtues are superior. By this means thou wilt reflect a lustre on the fame of thy fathers; thou wilt become an honor to thyself and family; an ornament and service to thy friends and thy country. Adieu.

C.

I had almost forgotten to tell thee, that by the goodness of the king I am permitted to retire to Salamis, during the infection of the plague.

LETTER XIX.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THY accounts of the marriage at ECBATANA, and the thanksgiving sacrifice on the hills of Susa, were so kindly and agreeably written, that I should appear inexcusably negligent in

the cultivation of that friendship, which I esteem an honor to my character, if I suffered a want of equal materials to plead my excuse for not answering them. It is needless to trouble thee with a long relation of the distresses of the Athenians, since, besides the exact information thou hast already met with, I am afraid it would prove a very melancholy return to the pleasing cheerfulness of thy letters. But if pleasures of a private nature, in which thy friend is concerned, can add any thing to the satisfaction thou receivest from those of a public one, I will give thee a description of my retirement into Salamis, during the contagion of the plague; and the manner in which I employ my leisure hours. My old patron PHILEMON, through a laudable zeal in the service of his country, resolves to abide in the city, though at the peril of his own life. In the mean while, he has intrusted me with the charge of his family, and has sent us to his country-seat in this place, which is situated but a few furlongs from the coast of Attica.

Salamis is a small island of about two hundred and twenty stadia in circumference, remarkable for a complete victory gained over the fleet of XERXES by the conduct of THEMISTOCLES. It contains within that little compass a most surprising variety of hills and vales, rocks and plains, rivers and meadows fruitful fields and spacious lawns. These are diversified with many beautiful villas, belonging to the principal citizens and magistrates of the town of Athens. Several plantations of fruit and forest

trees, all strangers to the soil and climate of Persia, are here cultivated by the skill of the careful inhabitant; and contribute in a great measure to the romantic air and confusion of the landscape. On the summit of a lofty mountain, in the very middle of the island, you are presented with the noblest and most extensive prospect in the world. One view to the north (to say nothing of the pleasant country lying at your feet) commands Megara and Athens, with the ships in the Piræan harbour, through a considerable tract of land in the territories of Bœotia. Towards the south, the cities of Argos, Mycenæ, and Epidaurus, rise full before your eyes. To the east, you are soon struck with those numerous isles, called the Cyclades, which appear like so many pointed rocks dispersed over the Ægean sea; and to the west, you survey the Isthmus, with the stately buildings of Corinth. The house and gardens of my friend are plain and homely, unadorned with the pride of eastern magnificence, and improved by the Attic elegance of their owner. I frequently compare them with those of Alcinous in the Grecian Homer; and find the same simplicity in both, free from the false ornament and pomp of luxury. My time has of late been a good deal taken up (when the business of the king would permit me) in the perusal of the Grecian poets and historians. As thy curiosity will perhaps make thee desirous of being acquainted with their names and writings, I will fill this dispatch with

the clearest account I have been able to obtain of them.

For this purpose I shall begin with those, who have done most honor to the art of poetry; since it was originally the chief vehicle, by which the knowledge of government, religion, or philosophy, was conveyed to the dark understandings of mankind. The first founders of the fabulous theology are uncertain. LINUS, ORPHEUS, and MUSÆUS are remembered with some general marks of esteem, even in these ages of Greece. But their history is too uncertain and fictitious to bear a serious relation. We must descend therefore immediately to HOMER, who was at once the first and greatest poet of antiquity. The subject of his admired performance is the siege of Troy, and the adventures of the Grecian heroes, particularly of ULYSSES, on their returning, after a long absence, to their native kingdoms. He is said to have flourished between two and three hundred years after the destruction of that potent empire; and the Greeks retain such an high veneration for his memory, that many towns still contend for the honor of his birth. Smyrna carries the fairest title of them all; in confidence whereof she has erected a temple to his name, and the people worship him with the sacred rites of adoration. Consider him in his person and fortune, he is represented as a strolling indigent bard. Consider him in the qualities of his mind, possessed of every natural and acquired endowment human nature is capable of, it is impossible to refuse him that

reverence and regard, which is so justly due to the "father of the Grecian poets." At the same time I cannot be of their opinion, who ascribe the rise of all military and civil policy, religion and learning, to the genius of HOMER. It is enough to transmit his praise to the latest posterity, that the warmth and spirit of his expression is equal to the strength and loftiness of his thought, and the boldness of his imagination to the fertility of it. To this give me leave to add, that the beauty and contrivance of his fables, the music and variety of his numbers, and the regular composition of the whole, have raised the dignity of epic poetry in its infancy, if not at its very birth, to an inimitable period of perfection; insomuch that futurity shall wonder, without being able to arrive at it. HESIOD was a native of Cuma in Ætolia, and removed soon after his birth to Ascra in Bœotia. His writings are esteemed next in antiquity and value to those of HOMER. Some have wantonly made them contemporaries, and pretend to say, that HESIOD got the better of HOMER in a poetical dispute. But this is highly improbable, since it may be confessed, without detracting from his real merit, that HESIOD is by no means his equal. Besides, the nature of their talents is as different, as the style of their poems. The one excels more in sublimity than in accuracy; is less indebted to art than to nature; more engaged in the tumults of war, than the quiet of retirement. The other is rather studious of plainness than sublimity; less fond of ornament, than propriety; more addicted to the

images of a rural life, than the busy scenes of a public one. The simplicity of his parts, and the agreeable softness of his disposition, are evident from his choice of a style between loftiness and meanness, which is well suited to the undisturbed tranquillity of his station and temper. His success in this kind of poetry is sufficient to justify his claim to the second rank, without ever placing him in competition with HOMER for the first. They tell an odd story of him, which shows him to have been a man of either humor or caprice. For accidentally as he one day overheard a potter at his daily labor singing some of his verses with an ill accent and cadence, he threw himself down on the poor man's brittle property; at which the fellow immediately cried out, "why do you spoil my work?" "Because," answered HESIOD, "you spoil mine."

ALCÆUS excelled in a different way both from HOMER and HESIOD; but was more desirous of acquiring reputation in the capacity of a soldier and a patriot, than in that of a poet. His pretensions however to the two former, are not so well grounded as his pretensions to the latter. For as to his military glory, it appears, that in a battle between the Athenians and Mytileneans he fled suddenly from the engagement, and dishonorably left his shield in the possession of an enemy. And as to his zeal in the service of his country, notwithstanding his violent opposition to the measures of PITTACUS, the prudent tyrant of Mytilene, he was ambitious of aspiring to that

arbitrary command, which he blamed in the hands of another. All his writings are in the lyric strain, and composed in a very fine measure peculiar to himself. He has happily united closeness with magnificence, spirit with correctness, and the utmost strength of judgment with the warmth of fancy; and though his muse is generally employed in matters of love and gallantry, yet he always shows himself fit for subjects of a nobler nature. Since I have mentioned *ALCÆUS*, I should not omit his famous contemporary *SAPPHO*, who flourished in Mytilene about the forty-fourth olympiad, and was a woman of no great beauty, but of infinite delicacy and wit; enough, one should have thought, to atone for her other defects. She disdained the most passionate addresses of *ALCÆUS*; and upon his whispering to her one day, "that he had something to tell her, but" "was ashamed of it," she answered with a just indignation, "that if he had no reason to be ashamed of it, he would not conceal it." Her cruelty to him is the more remarkable, because she was much enamoured of one *PHAON*, whose unkindness in leaving her, as it was the occasion of her finest performances, so it was the cause of her death. She had a wonderful vein of insinuation and softness, which, even now, gives her writings such a powerful sway over the tenderest affections of human nature. There is something so graceful and unaffected in her expression and sentiments, so smooth and harmonious in her numbers, that the title of "tenth muse," bestowed on

her by the common voice of Greece, is no more than a due testimony of respect to the merit of her poetry.

ARCHILOCHUS was a native of Paros, and held in esteem as a poet, about the same time with SAPPHO and ALCÆUS. He generally passes among the Greeks for the inventor of a peculiar measure, called Iambic verse; but a man of learning assured me, that there is a piece of HOMER's, named Margites, still extant, that proves the contrary. His way of writing is strong and nervous, short and pointed, witty and satirical, but tinged with so much gall and malice, that he himself professes, "he could spare neither friend nor foe." They tell a remarkable story of him, that one LYCAMBES having offered him his daughter in marriage, and afterwards refused to give her, ARCHILOCHUS lashed them with such rancor and severity, that he and his daughter both hanged themselves.

Some years after lived ANACREON of Teos in Ionia, a man of ease and pleasure, dividing his time betwixt the amusements of wine, love, and poetry. He was so professed an enemy to care and business, that when his patron POLYCRATES of SAMOS made him one day a present of five talents, it disturbed his sleep; so he carried it back again the next, and told him, "that how considerable soever the sum might be, it was not a reward equal to the trouble of preserving it." His writings are agreeable to the freedom of his behaviour; so that he draws a very lively picture of his own character

character in the several touches of nature, that are to be found in his odes and sonnets. We may compare his muse to his mistress; she seems airy, loose, and negligent, and is dressed up with more art, the more she hides the appearance of it. He lived eighty-five years in one continued series of health and retirement. To make his death conformable to his life, he is said to have been choked with a grape-stone in his wine.

I shall not trouble thee with any memoirs of ALCMAN, BACCHYLIDES, IBYCUS, STESICHORUS, and SIMONIDES; though they excelled each in their different way, and the last of them hath particularly recorded, in verse, the four fights of MARATHON, THERMOPYLÆ, SALAMIS, and PLATÆA. But of all those, who contributed to support the grandeur of the lyric muse, PINDAR must be mentioned with most regard. His poems were composed in honor of several conquerors, at the Isthmian, Pythian, Nemeæan, or Olympic games; and give us a notion of the highest transport and elevation, to which this art can be advanced. His designs are so vast, his style so daring, his thoughts so striking and uncommon, that it requires as much attention to read him, as to imitate others. He has often been censured as too unbridled and irregular; yet this is not the least of his beauties, since an ode is intended more to raise our fancy, than to inform our judgment. It is adapted to the fire and majesty of PINDAR; his imagination is on the wing; he cannot stay for words to express

himself methodically; he uses the boldest sort of painting; he gives us a general likeness of his hero, without finishing the features. Thus has he triumphed over the labors of art, and extorted this approbation from mankind, that he alone is the "perfect and unrivalled master of the Grecian Lyre." The Athenians pride themselves to this day in an act of uncommon generosity, which they performed towards this admired poet. His own countrymen, the Thebans, having fined him in a large sum of money, for the particular regard he pays every where to Athens in the course of his odes, and his neglect of Thebes, that was his native city, the people of Athens honorably discharged the fine, and proved themselves not unworthy of the great esteem which PINDAR had conceived for them.

I should proceed in the next place to the dramatic poetry of Athens, and the writers of history: however, as to the former, thou wilt forgive me, if I say nothing of it at present, since it really seems so interwoven with the frame of the Athenian constitution, that an account of it would hardly be so proper for the perusal of a friend, as of a minister of state: and as to the latter, I must delay the little materials I have collected upon that subject, to another letter. But I detain thee too long from the presence of thy prince, whose affection thou hast secured by the duty of thy obedience; and whose bounty, by the zeal of thy service. Adieu.

From Salamis.

C.

LETTER XX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS the Mage.

THE miseries of the eastern world, whilst the plague lasted in those parts, much engaged my attention and my pity; and it seemed, as if the angry gods had intended by a variety of evils to extirpate the race of mortals from the earth. But sure their hottest vengeance was reserved for these devoted regions, and is now inflicted in the most complicated calamities that ever have befallen human kind. For that hasty and invisible destroyer, which had ravaged the Persian empire, begins now to spread itself through these parts, at a time when civil discord infects the Grecian states, and depopulates their most flourishing communities, worse than ever the Barbarian would have done. Who shall describe the terrors of the war, the ruins and devastations of many large and fruitful districts, which suffer not more from hostile fury, than from the policy of their own native inhabitants? By them are the most cultivated plains converted into solitary deserts; while the bare necessities, to support a lingering life of misery, are deposited in the principal cities only. Besides the numberless hardships which are undergone at Athens, while the whole people of Attica are pent up within the narrow bounds of that single metropolis, with these and many more circumstances of their distress, the plague, which daily increases,

must, among such a swarm of unhappy families, make a far more terrible havock here than it has elsewhere done. These miseries, though I myself, by leave of our most gracious monarch, enjoy a securer station at Salamis, yet fill my mind with that confusion and medley of passions, as if from a rock I beheld the tossings of a tempestuous ocean, and saw the shattered barks breaking in pieces amidst the merciless shelves and waves. But say, venerable SMERDIS, who, in those sequestered shades sacred to everlasting peace, enjoyest the friendly intercourse of superior beings! whose hallowed soul, unruffled by the storm of passions, and pure from every guilt, is a mansion for the great OROMASDES; whose calmest influence raises there no frantic transports, no unnatural emotions: say, why is ARIMANIUS permitted to disturb and invert the order of OROMASDES's works? Whether from his influence, that the mind of man is so easily perverted, and refuses to be under the guidance of those principles, which alone could direct it aright. Is it, alas! by the instigations of this evil demon, that it turns aside from the paths of virtue, and neglecting the true scheme of rational life, perplexes itself with many vain and painful desires, till it is at length bewildered in an endless labyrinth of hurtful pursuits? And is it then, that in consequence of this depravity so far owing to his own malignant influences, that the curst ARIMANIUS is afterwards permitted to exhaust his utmost malice in punishing those by all kind of natural evils, whom he himself

hath seduced and rendered obnoxious to them? Will the good and gracious OROMASDES suffer this to be? Teach me to solve these difficulties; instruct me better, if it be lawful, in the circumstances of our nature, and show me how, amidst all these intricacies, to maintain the power and justify the goodness of OROMASDES. These indeed are speculations which ill besit me, and to which I have little time to attend in my present situation and employment. But the miseries, which are daily represented to me, possess my mind with such solemn gloom, that I cannot forbear often to indulge the anxious wanderings of my own thoughts therein. It is in those peaceful mansions where you inhabit, that the mind is at liberty to examine into these abstruse doctrines; and enlightened by the eternal OROMASDES, may reflect upon itself the lively image of his beloved emanation, truth. Happy were those minutes, and I shall always rank them among the happiest of my whole life, which I spent with you in divine conversation, when I travelled into Bactria. How transported do I call to mind the hours when I was permitted to mingle among the learned crowd, and lay at your feet, while you presided in the schools of the Magi! But how inexpressible is the remembrance of some few happy times, when with you I wandered in those blissful paths, which heavenly contemplation seems before all others to have chosen for her peculiar abodes. It grieves me, faithful SMERDIS, that any anxiety should discompose you amidst those delightful scenes,

much more, any about my safety. A true zeal for the service of the Persian monarch, to whom I am bound in the strictest allegiance from the personal regards I owe him, has more than any other consideration attached me to his interests. Whatever then be ordained my fate, I shall endeavour with the greatest composure to submit to it. For that being, whom I have learnt among you to adore with a purer worship, that immaterial and invisible, call him OROMASDES, or whatever other name shall best express him to us, however clouds and darkness at present are about him, or at least involve our weaker understandings, cannot, I am persuaded, but be both powerful, just, and good; neither will I believe that he who sincerely seeks to please him by acting virtuously, will in the event of things be neglected by him. In the midst of these calamities at Athens, the famous HIPPOCRATES is arrived there; a man so eminent for his excellent skill and success in physic, that the greatest king thought no price too high to purchase him; a man, whose upright integrity, undaunted constancy, and love of the Grecian name endears him to the Athenians beyond their greatest benefactors, as his forementioned excellencies raise their esteem and veneration for him, as if their god APOLLO or ÆSCULAPIUS were come down among them. And though it were presumption almost in any thing to differ from thee, (and surely thy zeal for the Persian glory, and extreme veneration of the great king, can never be too much applauded,) yet say, O gentle SMERDIS,

can such a man deserve so severe a censure? The refusal is indeed astonishing; such wealth, such power, such interest with the greatest monarch of the world, were a bribe almost for the strictest virtue. But HIPPOCRATES can all this withstand: amazing obstinacy a Persian would call it, since the subjects of the great king have learnt to fall before his throne, and prostrate themselves at his footstool as to the shrine of some god; and I doubt not but custom has so well reconciled to them a government, which the Greeks call slavery, that they do this with the heartiest veneration for their sovereign; and where so excellent a prince presides, this may be perhaps the most perfect form of government. But as the genius and customs of countries vary, of course the manners of men must differ; and a diversity of circumstances will make that in one instance laudable, which were quite otherwise in another. To be born, educated, and converse in the free states of Greece must necessarily form the mind to principles of liberty, and settle in it very opposite notions of what is great and virtuous, to those a Persian will from his education imbibe. It has done so all along while Greece retained its pristine glory; and can there then be a more illustrious example of Grecian virtue, can the love of one's country be carried higher, or can inflexible honor and unbiaſſed greatness of soul be shown in any instance that exceeds this?

From Salamis.

L.

LETTER XXI.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER at Salamis. *From*
Saba in Arabia.

LEAVING Babylon we fell down the king's river into the Tigris, the cataracts in this part of it being lately removed at the representation of some eminent merchants; and were conducted in one of the royal galleys to the Persian gulf, and landed upon Arabia the Happy at the Portus Itamus, the first haven beyond the mountains which divide that district from the sandy deserts. As soon as we came into the Sabæan territories, the whole country seemed one universal altar, ever breathing forth spontaneous incense to the heavens. The sweet effluvia are wafted by the winds, and spread a grateful fragrance for many miles beyond the coasts. And even the shores are covered with cassia and other odoriferous plants, that perfume the air with a strange variety of healthful and pleasant scents.

The rich product of this happy land brought to my mind the fable of MYRRHA's transformation, and her detestable passion for her father CINYRAS. The fictions indeed of a poetical fancy are commonly as arbitrary as the stories of the vulgar are incredible and ridiculous; and yet many traditionary fables, however wild and improbable they appear, are capable of being traced up to some very distant origin of truth. And thus, I was not a little surprised

being told by a native of this country, that there is a people in the farthest limits of the other Arabia, bordering upon Syria, whose descent is by the most ancient and best warranted records of history, deduced from an unnatural mixture of the same kind; they inhabit upon the river Arnon, and their chief city is Areopolis. The country, as we entered it farther and came nearer to Saba, still grew more ravishing, as well to the eye as the other senses⁹. We saw in our way several wild asses and ostriches of a large size, though both are more common in the deserts beyond the mountains. The first are exceedingly fleet, but the way of hunting them is by horsemen placed up and down in different parts of the chase; for the creature, after having run some time, will stop and stand still, but regains ground again so fast, that no single horse can keep up after it. Their flesh is esteemed by the luxurious in eating much nicer than that of venison. The ostrich is not to be taken, because when her feet fail her, she can use her wings to escape. The spacious plains, that lie between the mountains, are garnished with the freshest herbage, and laid out by nature in the most beautiful garden, where the fertile soil teems with aromatic gums and the party-colored blossoms of odoriferous spices. The sides of the mountains still exceed the vallies in plenteousness. There rise the clearest springs,

⁹ Xenoph. de Exped. Cyr. Ed. Francof. lib. prim.
p. 256.

which, after they have run among the hills, supply refreshing rivers to water the plains beneath. The hanging groves of palm-trees on the steepest declivities shade the delighted traveller, while the impending rays of a more genial sun ripen the vegetable juices, and amidst the pregnant minerals digest the rich seeds of gold ¹⁰. Saba, the ancient metropolis of this happy land, is situated on an easy ascent: the mountains that surround it rise and fall in shapes the most pleasingly striking and romantic, discovering the summits of other hills beyond them, which are seen in prospect from the royal town, till the eye is lost in an undistinguished mass of fainter risings, blended by their distance amidst transparent clouds. I call it the royal town, for a sort of kingly government still subsists in it ¹¹; nor have the Arabians of this district been ever subjected to a foreign power, as the Arabians in general are rather friends and allies to the Persian empire, as they were before to the Assyrian, than vassals and tributaries to either; though upon some occasions they have courted by presents the favor of our mighty monarchs. The riches and grandeur of this place bespeak it to have been the seat of many potent princes. The palace, the citadel, and the ruins of a library, show the most expensive state of royal magnificence. The porticos of their public

¹⁰ Agatharchidis Periplo, p. 63.

¹¹ Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. initio. Herod. Thal. c. 97. *ibid.* 91. & 7. *ibid.* lib. iii. c. 3.

buildings are overlaid with gold; but the splendor of some of their private houses is incredible. A monument is still shown in an ancient temple, where they say is reposed the sacred dust of a queen, once the wonder and glory of the East: a queen, whose genius was equal to the highest things, and her learning and knowledge proportionate to her genius. It was her thirst after the endowments of the latter, that induced her to travel into the distant country of Judæa, with infinite pomp and magnificence, to visit a king renowned for the greatness of his wisdom, the riches of his kingdom, and the prosperity of his reign. She proved him by hard questions, and discoursed with him on subjects of the most refined nature. His wisdom, his riches, his prosperity, exceeded the reports of fame, and wrapt her in the deepest astonishment. Under her reign Arabia was a powerful and flourishing kingdom¹²; an epoch of its greatness more certain than the ancient times they boast, of their kings reigning in Babylonia before the days of NINUS. She ruled with wisdom and equanimity, beloved by her subjects, and regarded by all as their common parent: her court was a college of learned men, where all were generously received, and met with suitable rewards, who made any useful improvements in arts and sciences, or new discoveries in the knowledge of nature. Among other improvements¹³,

¹² Syncell.

¹³ Cicero, de Divin. lib. i. c. 42.

the Arabians are esteemed to be skilled in augury and soothsaying. Whether there is any certainty in this science, it belongs not to me to dispute. Our great CYRUS is reported to have paid a religious regard to augury. It is not improbable, that as the warmth and pleasantness of the climate will allow them to lie out all the year in the fields with their flocks and cattle, which, in several parts of this country, they are great dealers in, they may have made more observations than others upon the different flights and motions, the various sounds and voices, of the fowls of the air. My short stay here, in passing through the country, will not permit me to make a strict inquiry into their religious doctrines and ceremonies. But the chief objects of their worship are the sun and moon ¹⁴, which they name in their language Urotalt and Alilat; and to Urotalt is daily offered frankincense and myrrh in his temple at Saba. They pay likewise a religious regard to the souls of their most eminent lawgivers and benefactors ¹⁵, upon a persuasion, which has pretty generally prevailed throughout the world,

¹⁴ Herod. Thal. c. 8. Philostrorg. in Phot. Strabo, & Theophrast.

¹⁵ Δῆλοι δὲ εἰσιν οἱ Βάρβαροι διαφερόντως τιμήσαντες τὰς αὐτῶν νομοθέτας, ψυχὰς γὰρ ἀσάδας κατὰ Πλάτωνα κατὰ λιβύαν τὸν ὑπερβράχιον τόπον υπομείναι ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὸνδὲ τὸν τάβλαρον, καὶ σῶμα ἀναλαβόντας — ὑπολαμβάνουσι — βραχμάνες τε σύμπαντες — ἐθεολόγησαν ἀκριβῶς τὰ ἐκείνων. Χαλδαῖοι τε καὶ Ἀράβιοι οἱ κληθέντες Εὐδαίμονες. Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. i.

and is a principle of the philosophy of the Sabian Magi, that those excellent persons were benevolent demons, who from a superior happy state descended into mortal bodies, and were contented to submit to all the inconveniencies and evils of human life, for the benefit and advantage of mankind.

Thy letter, CLEANDER, has just reached me, in which thou conceivest too high an opinion of my parts and improvements. But however incapable I am of answering thy expectations, or following thy excellent rules for the direction of my travels, I am glad thou encouragest me to unbosom to thee such trivial observations, as a variety of new objects will naturally suggest; which to a young traveller, when the fancy is heated, and his thoughts distracted with repeated novelties, is next to the pleasure he took in seeing the things themselves. I rejoice that thou art removed to Salamis, and that our excellent monarch has such a tender regard for his able and faithful ministers. Adieu.

L.

LETTER XXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

MY last letters, noble scribe, contained a faithful account of the miserable state of Athens, under the afflicting circumstances of a war and pestilence united to distress them. The posture of their affairs, since I wrote, has received

no alteration, but what increases their discontent, and adds to their misfortunes. Besides the continuance of the plague, the operations of this summer's campaign were not much in their favor. PERICLES has been forced to raise the siege of Epidaurus, and is returned home with his squadron, after wasting the coasts of Peloponnesus, which is the only damage their enemies have received from this expedition. News is since come, that the siege of Potidæa goes on very slowly; the army before that place being much weakened, as well by the sallies of the garrison as by the plague, which a late reinforcement from Athens brought among them. The Peloponnesian army did not stay long in the territories of Attica; for hearing that PERICLES was ravaging their country, and being apprehensive of infection from the plague, they retired home, and are now dispersed into their respective cities. The Lacedæmonians are preparing to invade the island of Zacynthus. The party opposite to PERICLES take advantage of his ill success at Epidaurus, to incense the people against him, who expected he would have made their domestic grievances more tolerable, by extending their power and reputation abroad. CLEON accuses him in every assembly, in his insolent and declamatory harangues, as the sole cause of the miseries of Greece. He charges him with having involved his country in an expensive war, purely for his own interest, and the preservation of his own authority; and then wasting the public treasure in fruitless expeditions, and suffering

their enemies to insult them at their gates, through cowardice and imprudence in the conduct of it. Another piece of slander is spread about, relating to a decree of the Athenians against Megara, which prohibits all commerce between the two cities, makes it capital for any native of Megara to be seen in the dominions of Athens, and enjoins the generals of the republic to make an annual invasion of their territories. This severe decree the Lacedæmonians demanded to have reversed; which PERICLES strenuously opposed, recriminating upon the Megareans for harbouring their revolted slaves, and murdering an Athenian herald. However, it is confidently affirmed here, that he promoted this affair with no other view than to revenge an insult put upon his mistress ASPASIA by some young Megareans, who stole away two of her slaves. PERICLES and his friends justify his measures at large, against all these accusations. They represent, "that
" whoever considers the situation of affairs in
" Greece, must be convinced that the war
" wanted no incendiary to set it on foot, since
" it owes its rise to a very natural cause, the
" jealousies of Lacedæmon and Peloponnesus
" of the grandeur of Athens; particularly of
" the former, as they thought it had risen upon
" the ruins of theirs; that the Athenians had
" paid more regard even to the literal sense of
" treaties than their enemies, who, before the
" war broke out, required them to satisfy the
" complaints of the Corinthians and Megareans
" without farther debate, though it was expressly

“ stipulated by an article of the last treaty be-
 “ tween the Grecian states, that all controversies
 “ should be referred to arbitrators, to be de-
 “ termined in an amicable way, before either
 “ party had recourse to arms : That many of
 “ the Lacedæmonians demands, though not in
 “ themselves unjust, were yet rendered im-
 “ proper to be granted, by the imperious manner
 “ in which they were urged; and that a tame
 “ and ready submission to them would have
 “ been looked upon as a tacit confession, in the
 “ Athenians, of weakness and pusillanimity.
 “ They vindicate the management of the war,
 “ by laying it down as a clear maxim, that
 “ every state should exert its natural strength
 “ in carrying one on; and that the Athenian
 “ superiority in a naval force makes it necessary
 “ to form such a plan of operations as is most
 “ suitable to the sea-service : That the Pelo-
 “ ponnesian invasion of Attica can never be of
 “ long duration, because the country furnishes
 “ no subsistence for the forces; and it would
 “ be a rash attempt to besiege so strong and
 “ well-garrisoned a city as Athens : That in
 “ the mean time their coasts are exposed, their
 “ commerce ruined, and their squadrons not
 “ able to resist those of the Athenians.”

This is the sum of the charge on the one
 hand, and the defence on the other. Those
 who exert themselves with most address in
 behalf of PERICLES, are his nephew ALCIBIADES,
 a young man of an aspiring disposition, and his
 old friend EPHIALTES the orator. CLEON,
 HYPERBOLUS, and TOLMIDES, men of low birth,
 but

but some popular talents, are the great opposers of his administration. And though I am far from thinking it faultless, yet, in the present dispute, I believe most argument will be found on his side, and the greatest variety of scandal on that of his adversaries. However, things here are in a very fluctuating condition. At present the people show themselves so uneasy at the continuance of the plague and the war together, that in the last assembly ambassadors were sent to Lacedæmon to declare that they were ready to accept peace on any reasonable conditions. But I hear the last letters from thence give no hopes of obtaining it. I shall conclude this dispatch with mentioning, that HIPPOCRATES of Cos was ordered, by a late decree, to be initiated in the sacred mysteries, to be presented with a crown of gold, to enjoy all the privileges of an Athenian citizen, and to be maintained at the public charge for the rest of his life.

Such, potent minister, are the rewards of virtue amongst the Grecians; such the incitements to despise danger in the service of their country! A crown, bestowed by the free voice of the state; a statue erected to their honor; or a mark of respect shown to their posterity; are sufficient recompences for the most illustrious actions, and allowed to none but persons of distinguished merits. Whilst they can attain these, they despise the treasures of the East, and account it more honorable to be a native of Athens [or Sparta, though upon the level with their fellow-citizens, than a satrap of

Persia, who has the inestimable distinction of approaching the splendid throne of the lord of Asia.

From Salamis.

P.

LETTER XXIII.

ARTAPHERNES to CLEANDER. *From the Forest of Nyssa, near Ecbatana.*

I SHOULD own myself unworthy the correspondence you began last year in the hurry of your first arrival at Athens, if the disordered state of the province of Lydia, which was then added, by the king's goodness, to my former government of Sardis, did not furnish me with a sufficient excuse.

The corruptions and irregularities which, under the satrap my predecessor, had crept into the military and civil affairs of the province, as the management of the forces, the revenue, and the judicial proceedings, required not only an early, but in many cases a severe correction. I was obliged to remove several of the chief officers, to punish others as they deserved, and to prefer those who, for their abilities and integrity, were before neglected and disgraced. But as the most necessary reformation seldom fails of making the promoter of it unpopular, complaints were made against me at court by the persons removed, which, at the earnest request of their friends, occasioned a particular order to the inspectors, who are

sent annually through the provinces of the empire to examine the conduct of the governors, that they should make a strict inquiry into mine. After a long and exact examination, I was declared to have acted, not only with impartial justice, but with the greatest regard to the honor of the empire, and the service of the king. And soon after the commissioners had made their report, I received a letter of thanks and approbation, signed with the king's own signet, besides a rich Median vest, a farther proof of the royal favor. The affairs of Lydia being now quiet, and proceeding in a regular well-ordered course, I took a journey this summer to visit my friends at Ecbatana, and write to you from MEGABYZUS's palace in the forest of Nyssa; where that great man entertains his friends with that humanity and politeness which are so natural to him. HYDASPES, GOBRYAS, and INTAPHERNES, the captain of the Immortals, lay aside, now they are here, the manners of the court and the formalities of their offices; and converse upon the terms of freedom without levity, and friendship without affected reserves. However, that we may not quite forget our distinct employments, and think ourselves transformed into Bactrian Magi, it frequently happens, that the minister is summoned to council, the secretary returns to his office, the chamberlain to his station in the palace, the commander to his quarters; and all of us attend the king to the chase, which, you know, is the usual diversion of the court. At the last hunting match on Mount Orontes, a fierce tiger

leaped out of a close thicket, and sprung forwards towards the king, who was in the utmost danger. ARTYPHIUS, the son of MEGABYZUS, stepped immediately before him, and with one stroke of his javelin laid the furious beast dead upon the spot. Nor was our generous lord unmindful of so signal an instance of courage and resolution; for he presented his deliverer with a gold chain worth 1000 darics, besides adding the most obliging expressions of praise and esteem. This accident has been the more talked of, as the father was formerly disgraced for the very same thing that now procures rewards to the son. But the case of the former gave rise to an edict, declaring it lawful to strike a beast before the king had flung his dart, which was before looked upon as the highest instance of disrespect. The Cadusians have, from their mountainous country, made an incursion upon the northern parts of Media, taken a rich booty, and defeated the satrap, who attempted to oppose their ravages. A body of troops lately marched towards those frontiers, and ARTYPHIUS set out to-day with a stronger detachment to reinforce them. His late brave action furthered not a little his advancement to be general in this expedition; and as he is a young man of extraordinary skill and valor, it is not doubted but that he will soon reduce these barbarians. I think you will know all the court news, when I have told you that BAGORAZES, the eunuch, is made cup-bearer. HYDASPES, the chamberlain, communicated your last letter to the company here, which

gave them great entertainment. They are only concerned that Persia cannot afford materials of equal value for an answer. Your friends think shortly of using your assistance in the purchase of Grecian books and curiosities. Such commissions will not be the least troublesome part of your employment. Your repeated acknowledgments for the good offices I did you with the Persian ministers were quite unnecessary; it is a sufficient return that you answer their highest expectations. Farewel.

P.

LETTER XXIV.

MEGABYZUS to CLEANDER. *From Ecbatana.*

THOUGH GOBRYAS has already acquainted thee with what approbation thy accounts of the affairs of Greece are received, and in his last dispatch had orders to open to thee the plan on which we determined to proceed in relation to these Grecian quarrels, and the reasons on which we formed it; yet I by no means think myself dispensed from acknowledging thy letters, or expressing, as well the particular satisfaction they have given me, as the hopes I conceive, that thy past services will produce others of still greater value and importance. The plague, that rages at Athens, makes us a little impatient to know, whether it will produce an alteration in their measures;

for affairs in a popular constitution are always so fluctuating and unsteady, that any present inconvenience or misfortune turns the course of their politics, and even shakes the foundations of their government. At the same time, though the Athenians have already offered peace, I much question whether the Lacedæmonians will accept it, without imposing conditions the most disadvantageous to the commerce and greatness of the former; perhaps obliging them to lessen the number of their ships, or give up the protection of the most useful of their allies. But if ever the Athenians submit to these terms, they will lose the two chief sources of their power and wealth, and be reduced to the same inconsiderable state, from whence they were raised, in my memory, by the judgment and valor of THEMISTOCLES.

Nor will it be for the interest of Persia, that either Lacedæmon or Athens should obtain the superiority over the rest of Greece, or be able to influence their counsels. In that case, the ruling commonwealth would be always ready and able to undertake some united enterprise against Persia, invade the fertile provinces of Asia Minor, waste our coasts, encourage the disaffection of our governors, always prepared, through fear of punishment for their oppressions, to shake off their obedience, and erect the provinces intrusted to their care into independent principalities. But I hope for better things; that the spirit of our great CYRUS, which watches over the mighty empire he so gloriously founded, will preserve the throne of his posterity from

such insults; that the peace we continue to enjoy, will help us to expel every noxious humor or latent venom of fraud, rapine, and corruption, from the various parts of our government; that a strict exercise of military discipline may restore to us those hardy troops, which ravaged the empire of the East from the Assyrians, and made us masters of the wealth and pompous structures of Egypt; and that a regular and steady pursuit of well-grounded counsels may enable us to balance the divisions of Greece, and preserve such an equality of power amongst its different states, as to turn the scale effectually whenever we interpose.

The Peloponnesian ambassadors, with ARISTÆUS of Corinth at their head, are already on their way towards Thrace, where they are ordered to execute a commission with SITALCES, and from thence to repair to the court of our great monarch. We shall not be in haste to dispatch them, but under pretence of examining the causes of their quarrel with Athens, and the motives they may offer to engage us in their alliance, detain them, till we see, whether the Athenians will follow them in applying for our assistance, or till the fortune of the war determines us which part it is most advantageous to Persia to support. In the mean time, continue to inquire, whether the Athenians are informed of this embassy, and send us speedy advice what resolutions they take upon it, by which it will be very necessary for us to regulate our behaviour. Our curiosity is not less raised to know how PERICLES stands his

ground in this difficult situation. I cannot think they have any one considerable enough, either for abilities or authority, to succeed him in the chief management of their affairs. Be assured, CLEANDER, that however these fickle republics, founded in discord and mutability, change their favorites, because the shining lustre of their great qualities expose them to the malicious efforts of popular envy, the court of Persia follows no such maxim; the unjust custom of ostracism is not yet established here. Thy merits, far from giving umbrage, secure to thee the protection of thy prince and the esteem of his ministers; and far from obstructing thy advancement, or rendering thee liable to disgrace, are the surest and most honorable methods of furthering thy progress in the one, and preserving thee from any danger of the other. Adieu.

P.

LETTER XXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Thebes in Ægypt.*

AFTER we had traversed Arabia, and seen in our way the sepulchre of Isis and Osiris at Nyssa, the pillars of which are inscribed in the sacred Ægyptian letters, we passed the Idumæan gulf, and our tour lay strait for No-Ammon. This is the ancient Thebes of Ægypt, celebrated in the writings of the Grecian HOMER. The

city is in circuit 140 stadia, but anciently took in a much greater compass; and both for the magnificence of its buildings, as well as the wealth contained within its walls, was esteemed not only the most beautiful and noble one of Ægypt, but of the whole world. From the long records of the Theban dynasty, it appears to have been founded in the earliest times. It was taken by surprise¹⁶, and first pillaged by the Carthaginians, when the rising greatness of their republic began first to annoy the neighbouring states. It was afterwards invaded by the Assyrian, but suffered most from the madness of CAMBYSES, when he returned from his Æthiopian expedition. It was then that ancient temple here, the largest and richest of the four, so admirable for its beauty and greatness, was stripped of its gold, ivory, and precious stones. However, the fabric is left standing, and its circuit is 13 stadia, 45 cubits the height, with a wall 24 feet broad. There are about the city innumerable colossal statues and obelisks of one entire stone; and these form, on every side of this famous capital, those stately avenues which add so much to its apparent largeness. The many quarries of marble and porphyry, of which the upper Ægypt is full to the south, had furnished them with materials; nor can we wonder that they found hands to raise such stupendous works, when we are told that the ancient kings of Thebes carried their conquests as far as Scythia, Bactria, and

¹⁶ Hanc inter exordia pendentis se late Carthaginis improvise exercitu duces opprellere Pœnorum.

Ammian. Marcell. lib. xvii.

India. The city extends for a great length on both sides the Nile; and in ancient times an hundred stables lay along the river, on the Lybian side, from Thebes to Memphis, each of which would contain 200 horses, which were always ready for the service of the state and the quick dispatches of public couriers; and many of these remain to this day very entire.

Among the principal wonders of Ægypt is always ranked the vocal statue of MEMNON¹⁷, which is of a stone called the Bifaltes, of the hardness and color of iron. Half of it from the head to the middle was broken off by CAMBYSES; what remains is in a sitting posture, the feet and legs closed together. The sound it utters at sun-rising resembles that of the strings of a lyre, that is cracked and out of tune: the sound I am witness to, but cannot be sure whether it came from the base or the statue, or from any by-stander. Near this place¹⁸ are concealed under-ground the most venerable remains of Ægyptian antiquity, I mean the pillars of HERMES¹⁹. It was with much solicitation and difficulty I gained admittance to the place where they were shown, and by a particular favor of the priests, for which I am indebted to PHARNUCES, the governor. Within the enclosure of an ancient edifice, a repository of the sacred books and

¹⁷ Plin. lib. xxxvii. c. 7. Pausan. Att. p. 78. Philost. lib. vi. c. 3.

¹⁸ Thebis trans Nilum ad *Συψύγας* quas vocant statuas est resonans. Paus. Att. p. 78.

¹⁹ Syncell. p. 40. b. Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxii. p. 232.

other monuments, you descend a great depth by rough and craggy steps in the rock; the place seems to have been formerly dug into as a quarry. At the bottom a large gap opens before you, through which I was conducted into several dark chambers by perplexed winding passages, till at last I discovered a distant glimmering light, which directed me through a long narrow avenue, the farther end of which opened into a spacious cave. The strange solemnity of the place must strike every one that enters it with a religious horror; and is the most proper to work you up into that frame of mind, in which you will receive, with the most awful reverence and assent, whatever the priest who attends you is pleased to reveal concerning the wonderful monuments deposited therein. Towards the farther end of the cave, or within the inmost recess of some prodigious caverns that run beyond it, you hear, as it were a great way off, a noise resembling the distant roarings of the sea, and sometimes like the fall of waters dashing against rocks with great impetuosity. The noise is supposed to be so stunning and frightful, if you approach it, that few, they say, are inquisitive enough to search far into those mysterious sportings of nature. It put me in mind of those caverns ²⁰ of the Magi, under the mountains of my native Persia, where, by a strange reverberation of sounds in those hollow cavities, at first you hear a confused murmur,

²⁰ Clemens Alexand. Strom. lib. vi.

like the noise of numerous armies at the onset of the battle; as you proceed farther, the noise thickens upon you as in the heat of an engagement; at last, it resembles the shouts and acclamations of a victory. The arrangement of the lamps in this cave is exceeding beautiful. There are taper pillars from the ground to the height of the vault, probably left in that fashion when part of the natural rock was excavated, and the lamps hang about them from the bottom to the top. Surrounded with these pillars of lamps are each of those venerable columns, which I am now to speak of, inscribed in the hieroglyphical letters with the primæval mysteries of the Ægyptian learning. They are said to have been placed here by HERMES TRISMEGISTUS ²¹, a sage as highly revered amongst the Ægyptians, as ZOROASTER is with us. To him ²² they ascribe the contrivance of letters, and the first forming of articulate sounds, and every other invention of chief use to human life. They will not settle his antiquity; only told me, that these pillars had withstood the strongest shocks of nature, and remained firm and entire, when an universal deluge laid waste and shattered this terraqueous globe. The same person, I observe, they generally call THOTH, or ATHOTHES. To this MERCURY is attributed the famous computation of 36,525 years, in which period of time he

²¹ Or rather Mer-Cheres Trismegistus.

²² Diod. Sic. lib. i.

supposed the several heavenly bodies did exactly go through all the relations, which they could have in their motions, to one another, and came round to the same point from which all their courses began; and upon these pillars, say the priests, he has given a perfect demonstration of it. To these their historians have recourse for the ancient annals of this country. From these pillars, and the sacred books, they maintain that all the philosophy and learning of the world has been derived. From these the ancient ORPHEUS borrowed his celebrated system of the origin of things. To these PYTHAGORAS and THALES were indebted for those discoveries which have established their reputation to all succeeding ages. It was my good fortune to be here at a time when a great sacrifice and lustration to the mysterious HERMES, or MERCURY, was to be solemnized within the bowels of this stupendous cave, which is done once in fifty years; at which time only it is granted, and that through a particular mark of favor and courtesy, to some stranger of rank and distinction, to be admitted within these hallowed caverns. At other times only the tedious discipline and preparations which PYTHAGORAS for thirty years underwent, to be initiated into their mysteries, would qualify one to be admitted to these sacred monuments.

The city takes its ancient name from the god AMMUN, whom the Greeks call JUPITER. He is the same with SATURN, or CHRONUS, the father of OSIRIS. From his other names,

which are THAMUS²³ and CHAMUS, the whole land still retains at Thebes the name of Chemia²⁴. He is represented with the face of a ram; and in Thebais the killing of that species of animals would be punished as a most heinous and capital offence, which may be done but one day in the year, in the festivals of their god; and then a single ram is slain, and his-skin²⁵ fleaed off to be hung upon the statue of AMMUN; and the image of HERCULES must be brought and set before it; because it is said the god appeared in that manner to HERCULES, upon his earnest and pressing instances to see him. The carcase of the ram is afterwards beaten by all that attend at the solemnity, and then buried in one of the sacred repositories.

It is a tradition here²⁶, that the first priestesses of the Libyan oracle of JUPITER AMMUN, and of the Dodonæan oracle in Greece, were taken away, and sold by the Phœnicians into those countries out of Thebes.

I shall stay here some time, from whence I may entertain you with fresh varieties, if my report of things is in any sort interesting. Adieu. L.

²³ Plato in Phædro. βασιλέως τότε ὄντος Αἰγύπτου ἔλης Θάμυς περὶ τὴν μεγάλην πόλιν τῆ ἀνω τόπῃ, ὃν εἰ Ἕλληνες Αἰγυπτίας Θήβας καλῶσι, καὶ τὸν θεὸν Ἀμμῶνα. p. 1240. b.

²⁴ Εἰς τὸν Αἰγυπτίον Χημία καλῶσιν. Plutar. de Iside.

²⁵ Herod. Euterp. 42.

²⁶ Ibid. 54, 55.

LETTER XXVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Salamis.*

SINCE my last dispatch, noble scribe, the state of Athens has continued in a perpetual ferment. The jars and cabals of opposite factions, the calamities of the plague, the weight and charge of the war, a general dislike of the present measures, and no unanimity in a steady pursuit of others, have by turns occasioned the utmost perplexity in the counsels, and impatience in the tempers, of this people.

The ambassadors they had sent to Lacedæmon declared at their return, that peace could be obtained on no terms, but such as were absolutely disadvantageous and unreasonable. When the present condition of their affairs was debated in an extraordinary assembly, PERICLES rose, and with a resolution not to be daunted by the clamors of his adversaries, and a strength of argument which they were unable to confute, endeavoured to soften the irritated minds of the people, to raise their drooping spirits, and to turn their resentment from himself upon the Lacedæmonians. He represented to them, "That the reasons which induced him to enter into this war were still the same, and received no alteration from the cross accidents of fortune; which it was impossible for the most refined human prudence to foresee or prevent: That the misfortunes of particulars ought not to make

“ them neglect the common interest of the
“ whole, which could not be secured, but by
“ preserving their bravery and independence:
“ That whilst they continued masters of the
“ sea, the ravages of their lands, or the loss
“ of their country-seats, were not to be regard-
“ ed; these might easily be recovered: but if
“ they suffered their spirits to sink, and des-
“ paired of success, they would not only be
“ deprived of such ornamental advantages, but
“ of the most essential one of all, in which
“ consisted the very being of their republic,
“ their liberty. Therefore (concluded he)
“ leave off blaming your governors for an event
“ that seems inflicted by the hand of Providence;
“ since evils from Heaven are to be patiently
“ submitted to, those from men to be valiantly
“ opposed. Rouse up, Athenians, your an-
“ cient resolution and generosity; send no
“ more heralds to the Lacedæmonians, and
“ show yourselves as well worthy as able to
“ maintain your pretensions of being at the
“ head of Greece.” I have given this short
account of PERICLES’s speech, that the Persian
ministers might have an idea both of the manner
of addressing the people in these democratical
governments, and of that particular force and
vivacity which distinguish the eloquence of this
great statesman. He obtained part of what he
contended for; the assembly resolved that no
more overtures of peace should be made to the
allies; but at the same time, in the height of
their warmth and violence, deprived him of
his command, and fined him fifty talents, upon the
the

the motion of CLEON and SIMMIAS. Thus PERICLES, who has so long disposed, almost absolutely, of the treasures, forces, and honors of Athens, is reduced by a single vote to the condition of a private citizen; undistinguished by any, except his former reputation and eminent abilities, which spread such a lustre round him, that no artful coloring of his adversaries can ever deface. Nay, perhaps, to a philosophic eye he appears greater in his disgrace, which he bears with temper, than adorned with all the glory of external grandeur and dignity. The death of several of his friends and chief confidants in business, and the divisions occasioned in his family, through the extravagance of his son XANTIPPUS, add no small pressure to his misfortunes.

As soon as these animosities begin to cool, I shall not fail to send advice in what hands the administration seems most likely to be lodged; whether in a set of new favorites, or (as several imagine) in those of the old one. I come now to answer the particular direction thou gavest me concerning the Peloponnesian embassy, which has been since repeated by MEGABYZUS; and I am sorry my information must prove disagreeable, for the Athenians are now acquainted with the design on which the ambassadors are sent to SITALCES and our great master, and the route they are to take. Yesterday the senate dispatched a courier, with private orders to their ministers at the court of SITALCES; and though the contents of them are not publicly known, and are kept as secret

as any thing can be in a popular government, I have no room to doubt that they contain a demand that the Peloponnesian ambassadors should be put into their hands; in which request they expect to be assisted by SADOUS, the son of the Thracian prince, who was last year made a citizen of Athens. ARISTEUS, the chief of the embassy, is particularly aimed at: it appears that the revolt of Potidea, and the troubles in Thrace, are owing to his contrivance. Might I presume to advise the Persian ministry, if this letter arrives in time, some person of address and skill in the Thracian manners should be sent, on the part of the king, to SITALCES, and endeavour, either by menaces or bribes, to prevent so base a compliance. But thou must receive advice of the issue of this matter much sooner from PHARNABAZUS, the governor of the Hellespont, than from hence. I cannot, however, help expressing my concern for the safety of these ambassadors. The Athenians, in their present headstrong ungovernable disposition, and the warm resentment they express against the Lacedæmonians, are not likely to pay much regard to their sacred rights.

I shall take the first opportunity of removing to Athens, whenever it can be done without danger of infection from the plague. In the mean time, illustrious satrap, permit me to return my humblest acknowledgments for the honor of the confidence thou reposest in me; unworthy as I am to partake in the councils of Persia, I will at least make no ill use of those intrusted to my secrecy, but punctually

observing the orders I receive, and regulating my own conduct by the rules they prescribe, I will endeavour to supply all deficiencies in knowledge and experience, by the zeal and integrity of my service. P.

LETTER XXVII.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES. *From Salamis.*

I WOULD endeavour, noble satrap, to equal, if not the agreeable and lively style, which embellishes thy letters, at least that judicious choice of materials in them, which joins so artfully instruction to ornament; and I imagine, that a short survey of the present state of Grecian philosophy will not be an unentertaining speculation to one of thy improved and extensive curiosity. Besides the general use of an inquiry, which lays before us a kind of history of human reason, of the discoveries it is capable of making, the exalted heights to which it can attain, and the gradual and regular steps by which it proceeds in the search of useful truth, I please myself with thinking, that a particular advantage, with regard to thee, will attend my discussing this subject. For as *Ægypt* may be called the parent soil of science, from whence the Greek philosophers transplanted many doctrines taught in the colleges of the priests, to cultivate them afterwards in their own schools; it is probable, that a view of the chief tenets maintained in the latter will further thy inquiries into the

more mysterious learning of the former, which must reciprocally throw in light upon some obscurities in the conduct and notions of those who, by their long stay in Ægypt, received no small tincture of the manners of their instructors. The Greek philosophy is at present divided into two principal sects, the Ionic, which was founded by **THALES** the Milesian, and the Italic, which owes its rise to **PYTHAGORAS**. **THALES** was born in the 35th olympiad, and is remarkable for being the first Grecian who taught a regular system of philosophy, and left a succession of disciples behind him to establish and maintain it. In the earlier part of his life he travelled into Ægypt, and during a residence of several years there, applied himself with such genius and industry to the sciences, under the direction of the priests, that he became able at last even to instruct his masters; and, it is said, showed them how to measure the height of the pyramids. He was afterwards employed in the service of **CROESUS** king of Lydia; and contrived to make the river Halys fordable for the army of that prince, by drawing off the water into trenches. On his return to Greece, he lived in a learned retirement, dividing his time between the culture of his favorite studies, geometry and astronomy, and the instruction of his followers, who held him in the utmost veneration. He has left several moral precepts on record; but is most celebrated for his knowledge of nature. He taught, that water was the principle out of which the Supreme Being created all things; that the universe is filled

with invisible spirits, who inspect the actions of men; that the earth is situated in the middle of the world, and moves round its own centre. He was the first among the Greeks who calculated eclipses of the sun and moon, and made observations on the motions of the celestial bodies. It is owing to him, that those wonderful phenomena, which by the ignorant and superstitious are looked upon as omens of approaching calamity, and tokens of the Divine wrath, appear to the philosophic eye as the simple and regular operations of beneficent and various nature; a discovery which alone ought to recommend his name to the esteem of posterity. He died in the ninety-second year of his age, whilst he was present at the Olympic games, and ANAXIMANDER succeeded him in the Ionic school. There is little known of this philosopher, except that in some points he did not adhere to the doctrine of his master; particularly he held, that there was nothing in the universe but an immense matter endowed with an infinite motion; and that in the fruitful bosom of the immense matter, every thing was produced by an eternal revolution of forms. By establishing this system, he excluded, at least tacitly, the existence of a supreme intelligent first cause. ANAXIMENES, his successor, ascribed the origin of all things to the air, and exerted his mechanical skill in the invention of a sun-dial, which was first set up at Lacedæmon, to the no small admiration of that warlike but unpolished people. The school of THALES was transported by ANAXAGORAS

from Miletus, where till his time it had flourished, to Athens, as a more conspicuous theatre for his talents to display themselves in. This philosopher was of a noble family in Ionia; but renounced all pretensions to a share in the government of his country, and the inheritance of a considerable estate, in order to apply himself with less interruption to the study of wisdom and the search of truth. Whilst he resided at Athens, he had the honor of reckoning PERICLES amongst his disciples; and it is generally believed, that the statesman owes no small part of his political as well as natural knowledge to the lectures of the speculative sage. The enemies of the former, unable to ruin his credit with the people, resolved to attack him in the persons of his friends, and accused ANAXAGORAS of degrading the sun from the number of the gods, by defining it to be a mass of fiery matter. The Athenians, who, by an odd contradiction, express frequently a warm zeal for the honor of their deities, when injured, as they imagine, by the philosophers, though they suffer them to be exposed with the low buffoonery of the comic poets, condemned him to death; but he avoided the sentence, by retiring to Lampsacus, where he died soon after. His disciples erected two altars to his memory, and dedicated the one to the eternal mind, and the other to truth.

ANAXAGORAS always declared himself against the notion of the world's being formed by chance, and attributed the order and life which are observable in it to the direction of an infinitely

wise and powerful mind. He held that there is no vacuum in nature; that every body is divisible in infinitum, and composed of little particles of a similar nature, as blood, for instance, of particles of blood, water of particles of water, &c. But I need not tire thy patience, with enlarging further on the lives and tenets of the philosophers of this sect: what I have already said is sufficient to give thee a tolerable idea of them; and thou hast judgment enough to perceive, that many of their opinions, being only founded on the probable assertions of system, instead of proofs drawn from nature herself, must be left for confirmation, or rejection, to the more accurate inquiries of future ages. I shall only add, that the Ionic school under ARCHELAUS, its present chief, has produced a disciple who seems likely to eclipse the same, not only of his master, but of every philosopher who has yet arisen in Greece. His name is SOCRATES, and he applies himself wholly to the moral part of philosophy, neglecting the natural, as a science too fanciful and uncertain. I must refer thee to another letter for an account of the Italic sect, and of PYTHAGORAS its great founder, since this is already swelled to a greater length than I intended it should. If I indulge too far the honor thou hast granted me of thy correspondence, be persuaded, generous ORSAMES, that it is not owing to any impertinent affectation of informing thee, or any want of respect to thy quality, but to that early taste I perceive in thee for useful literature, and my ardent desire

to share in that rational plan of education which thou hast laid down, of blending the elegant accomplishments of Grecian arts with the manly severities of the ancient discipline of Persia. Adieu.

P.

LETTER XXVIII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. *From Ecbatana.*

THE news of PERICLES's removal from public business gave me no great surprise. I know how precarious great honors are, and wonder most that he has so long maintained an authority, which the envious great and the lawless multitude have agreed to call tyrannical. The Greeks continue to answer the prayer of XERXES, by disgracing the most worthy citizens; and I wish the resentment of PERICLES would throw him into the interests of Persia, where he would be received with no less honor than his great predecessor THEMISTOCLES.

The king sent to intercede with SITALCES, that the Peloponnesian ambassadors might proceed to this court; but they were already delivered up to the Athenians, at the request of his son SADOUS, who has requited, by an act of treachery, the honor they did him last year of making him free of Athens. He may wish hereafter that so trifling a privilege had given place to the opportunity of doing a grateful act to the lord of Asia.

I am under no less apprehension than yourself for the lives of those men, at a time when the states are so exasperated against each other. It might be well to insinuate, that violent measures would confirm ARTAXERXES the enemy of Athens, already sufficiently irritated by their conduct. The ambassadors designed for Persia are indeed Peloponnesians, and they may plead the reasonableness of taking all advantages of an enemy; yet prudence and their misfortunes might teach them that they have no need of a new and more powerful one. At such a juncture, if they had receded a little from their pretensions, the courtesy would not have been misplaced; for we trust, that it is already in the hands of our monarch to determine the success to either party, and perhaps to reap the fruit of the war. I wish it were possible thou couldst put on the character of ambassador for one day, and ask the council of Athens, whether they were determined to make ARTAXERXES their foe? Methinks I see them confounded for an answer. Strait a rumor spreads among the populace, that the Persian must be appeased: they assemble in a tumultuous manner, and demand the Peloponnesians of their magistrates, and send them honorably attended to the court of Persia. But I leave it to your discretion to use such means as may seem most effectual to preserve them. Your distance from the city gives me little prospect of success; and I am not such an enemy to Persia, as to think their redemption an equivalent for the hazard of your life. Keep your station. I send you no command from

the king, of which he requires a stricter observance, than that you consult your safety. Farewel.

H.

LETTER XXIX.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Thebes.*

HAVING in a former letter mentioned to thee, CLEANDER, the hieroglyphical inscriptions of the famed Hermetic pillars in this country, I will here endeavour to give thee some general idea of the nature and construction of this mystic character. The Ægyptians, ever since the age of their renowned HERMES or TAAUTUS, have given much, it is said, into the humor of representing their thoughts to each other in a way of emblem or sensible imagery; a kind of expression, thou wilt observe, which addresses itself to the eyes, instead of the hearing, and which seems indeed to have this advantage, at first thought, of the method of speaking by sounds; that whereas words are merely arbitrary substitutes of the ideas they are used for, the characters of this picture-language have a sort of natural significancy in them, an aptness of themselves to convey their particular meaning. The first principles of the art I am speaking of (which, from being much used in the *sacra* of this country, passes here under the general name of hieroglyphics) are

laid in certain observable analogies, relations, or correspondencies of the particular forms, actions, or qualities of animals, to certain facts in nature, morals, or history. From whence it is easy to infer, that the prime elements, or radical words, if one may call them so, in this emblematical language, were, as in all other languages, not very numerous; and that the copiousness it is now possessed of has been the work of time and successive improvement: for a foundation once established in some few of the simpler and more obvious analogies above hinted at, the superstructure, thou wilt readily conceive, would be capable of infinite enlargement, as more nice and critical observations in the kind should bring in new materials for this purpose. It has doubtless been with this view, that the Egyptians have ever been remarkable for bestowing a more than ordinary attention upon the various particularities of their country animals. And the fruit of their application this way abundantly shows itself in that large fund of symbols they have in use, for treating almost every subject one can think of. To signify, for example, the introduction of tillage and agriculture among them by the beneficent OSIRIS, one of their gods, whom they boast to have reigned in this country, they describe an ox's head; the animal made use of by him, as it has been ever since, in ploughing their lands. When they would represent any person with a numerous offspring, they exhibit the figure of a crocodile; an animal, it seems, remarkable

with them for its prolific and fruitful quality. Thus again, the goat being observed to be a more than ordinary salacious and wanton animal, is for this reason made the *Ægyptian* emblem of animal generation at large; as is the hawk and the serpent of the vital principle in animal bodies, from their being themselves supposed to partake, in an eminent degree, of that ether or spirit in which it is imagined life consists. When they would express the moon, they do it under the figure of an ape, which they observe to have a kind of sympathy with this divine luminary; inasmuch as, at the time of the new moon, the males of this species become blind, refuse their usual food, and show evident tokens of sorrow for the then total disappearance of the moon's light; the females, at the same season, besides what happens to them in common with the males, suffering, it is remarked, a periodical infirmity of their own. The same animal is moreover the *Ægyptian* mark of the two equinoxes; it being found at each of these to have a regular discharge of urine once every hour, during the whole four-and-twenty. It were endless to enlarge upon this article, *CLEANDER*; and there is the less reason for it, as the particulars I have already mentioned may suffice to answer my intention in this letter. I think it not improbable, that the want of a regular alphabet first introduced this hieroglyphical language into *Ægypt*. But the priesthood here, who lose no opportunity to give the world an advantageous idea of their own order, have since found it extremely useful,

in establishing that high reputation they are in for wisdom of every kind; inasmuch as, being perfect masters of human nature, they have not failed to practise upon that prevailing foible of it, the thinking secrecy a sure token of importance, by contriving this, amongst other methods, to perplex the avenues to that knowledge they are possessed of, in order to raise the idea and enhance the credit of it. Adieu.

O.

LETTER XXX.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

THE court, which of late years has passed its winters at Susa, is now removed to spend this at Babylon; and though the pleasure of seeing so celebrated a city, and enjoying the spacious and well-cultivated country which lies round it, may have induced the king to change, for a time, the usual seat of his residence, yet I believe policy has some part in the resolution. For as Babylon was once the metropolis of a powerful empire, where the court of the Assyrian monarchs was constantly held, it is not without reluctance that the inhabitants submit to a foreign yoke, and from being always honored with the presence of kings, and graced with privileges, are now burdened with taxes for the support of their conquerors, and ruled by governors. Our monarch has rendered himself very acceptable here, by remitting part

of the tribute, which this province paid to his predecessors, and receiving with the utmost affability the satraps of the country, who came upon his arrival to prostrate themselves at his feet. He has been willing that they should partake of all the diversions of his court, and dismisses none whose merits are conspicuous, without some mark of distinction. Is not a prince worthy to possess the empire of the East, who like him exerts his absolute power for the good of his subjects; who travels through the different parts of his dominions, not merely to display the magnificence of his court, or to take a view of the outward face of the country, but to redress the complaints of his people, to attach to his interest by personal favors those whom duty has already subjected to his authority, and to learn to know and reward merit, not by the recommendation of his ministers, but by his own observation? But I must break off this moralizing discourse, which so little befits a courtier; and to afford thee materials for thy amusement as well as reflection, shall relate a surprising adventure which happened a few days ago at the palace. Thou must have heard that ARTABAZUS, the governor of Babylon, was lieutenant, to MARDONIUS at the battle of Platea, and afterwards put himself at the head of the Persian forces who remained, and brought them back to Asia, after a laborious and hazardous march. In the hurry of this confused retreat his wife, who followed him in the expedition, died of fatigue and grief; and his daughter, then an infant, was carried off by a party of

Greeks, who beat up one of his quarters in the night, and was never since heard of. In an entertainment lately performed at the palace a new dance was introduced, in which a beautiful slave of the queen's distinguished herself to the admiration of every body, and put several upon inquiring who she was. She had been bought two days before of a merchant of Cyprus, then at Babylon, who said she was sold to him by an Athenian soldier, who took her prisoner from the Persians not long after the action at Platea. This being told ARTABAZUS, he sent for the merchant, and upon comparing his account with other circumstances of this unfortunate accident which he recollected himself; upon seeing the rich ornaments which were taken with her, and found to be those with which the infant was adorned at the very time of her being lost; and upon examining the whole affair, the young slave was discovered to be the daughter of ARTABAZUS, sent him, as it were providentially, for the joy and support of his declining years, and to crown the success which had generally attended him in public, with this last instance of domestic felicity.

The satisfaction arising from this happy event has been heightened by the victory which ARTYPHIUS has gained over the Cadusians. That hardy people having taken a rich booty, were attacked in their retreat, and wholly routed. ARTYPHIUS pursued his advantage, marched his army into their country, and forced them to submit to a tribute, and to deliver up hostages. He is now upon his return, and highly commended

for the conduct and valor he has shown in this expedition. The troops which accompanied him were some of the veterans who had fought under MEGABYZUS in Ægypt. An ambassador is going to the king of the Scythians, to demand satisfaction for the ravages that nation have committed on our frontier provinces; and soon after him, DARIUS, the king's third son, will set out for the government of Hyrcania, which is lately bestowed on him. The revolution occasioned in the Athenian affairs by the removal of PERICLES, adds much to the curiosity with which we listen after Grecian news. It is thought surprising, that no action of importance, either by sea or land, has yet happened, though the war has now lasted near two years. Notwithstanding SITALCES has delivered up the Peloponnesian ambassadors, an agent from Lacedæmon, it is said, will shortly arrive here.

I transmit to thee by this messenger 5000 darics, which MEGABYZUS desires thou wouldst lay out for him in Grecian curiosities. If thou couldst procure him any fine pieces of sculpture, wrought by the hand of PHIDIAS, or some pictures finished by the pencil of ZEUXIS, it would be highly acceptable. When thou hast made these purchases, thou mayst convey them to thy brother at Ephesus, who has it in charge to send them to him. Farewel.

From Babylon.

P.

LETTER

LETTER XXXI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Salamis.*

OUR expectations, noble scribe, that the lives of the ambassadors would be endangered, have proved too well grounded; and it gives me uneasiness even to relate an action which the Athenians have shown no regret in committing. The Peloponnesian ambassadors were thrown into prison immediately upon their arrival, and a few days after put to death by a decree of the people, and their bodies cast into pits without the rites of burial; neither could the privileges of their character preserve them from the cruelty of the one, nor the common ties of humanity secure to them the decent ceremony of the other. As an additional circumstance of hardship, I am told, that though they earnestly desired to be heard before sentence was passed, they could not obtain a request never known to be denied to the greatest criminals. The Athenians plead in their excuse, that they only retaliate upon the Lacedæmonians, who acted in the same barbarous manner, with regard to some merchants of Athens, whose vessels they seized, trading upon the coast of Peloponnesus. But this will not, in any degree, justify a violation of the sacred rights of public ministers; and I rather take their resentment against the Lacedæmonians, for their late refusal of peace, their hatred of ARISTEUS, for the share he had in the revolt

of their towns in Thrace, and perhaps the instigations of those who desire a continuance of the war, to be the true causes of so extraordinary a proceeding. However, I cannot help observing, that while both parties express their enmity to each other, not by fair hostilities, or honorable contentions for the prize of national bravery, but by throwing off the principles of humanity, and committing acts of cruelty against those who are unable to defend themselves; the name of Barbarians, with which they have injuriously branded the rest of mankind, may with much more propriety be retorted on themselves. It was impossible for me, who have no public character, to have used any interest in favor of these miserable men; I should have exposed my own life to the suspicions of the populace, with whom, in their present rage, or rather madness, no persuasions, drawn either from interest or compassion, would have any weight.

The spirits of this people are much elated with the news lately arrived of the surrender of Potidea, which has held out two years, and is now given up to the Athenian generals, on conditions very favorable to the inhabitants, who are permitted to retire with part of their effects to Chalcis. The Athenians blame their generals for granting these terms; and maintain, that want of provisions, and failure of relief, would have forced the place to surrender at discretion. But they certainly acted with judgment; for the army had suffered much, by lying in the field during the inclemencies of

a Thracian winter, and the expenses of the siege amounted already to 2000 talents.

The plague, I hear, daily decreases at Athens, which will give me an opportunity of removing my station, and making inquiries myself on the scene of action, instead of hearkening to the reports of others at a distance from it. I shall there inquire further into the truth of an intelligence I lately received, that the dispositions of the people are very favorable towards PERICLES; and that his friends are in great hopes he will shortly recover his former authority, which, considering the sudden revolutions of popular governments, and the superior talents of PERICLES, would not much surprise me. May the mighty OROMASDES, potent lord, preserve the throne of CYRUS from the rude attacks of an unrestrained multitude, the want of able supporters, and the union of the Greeks!

LETTER XXXII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Thebes in Ægypt.*

AFTER the account which my last letter gave thee, CLEANDER, of the nature and genius of the Ægyptian hieroglyphics, I would in this proceed to consider them in a very remarkable consequence they have had in the religious œconomy of this country; the worship, I mean, which thou hast so often heard is every

where paid in it to some or other of its home-bred animals. This is indeed so striking an article among the many national peculiarities of this people, that it would be an unpardonable want of curiosity in a foreigner, not to inquire a little into the reasons upon which it is founded; and the state of the case I take in few words to be this: that the several animals now worshipped in Ægypt, having been at first applied as parts of a religious language, in the way of emblem, already described to thee, to express the natures and attributes of Ægyptian gods, have by time acquired such a degree of sacredness, as to be themselves added to the number of them. The temples here, of which there are great numbers, are all of them furnished with some animal representation; and the striking magnificence of their outside structure forms, I have often thought, a ridiculous contrast to the contemptible meanness of the sacred inhabitant within; which is, perhaps, a cat, an ape, or an ibis, the appropriated divinity of the particular pile. The regard paid by the Ægyptians to the several species of animals, whose figures constitute this system of religious emblemry, is really incredible but to an eye-witness of it. They have their guardians or attendants appointed them by public authority, who are to provide them their diet and other accommodations; an office not esteemed unworthy persons of considerable rank, and which, as it is conducted, is in itself a matter of no small expense, as well as delicacy. The executors of this trust are distinguished by certain insignia proper to their order; and in

consequence hereof are entitled to very particular marks of respect and reverence from all, who either with design or by accident come in their way. In some instances, I am told, to have killed one of these consecrated animals, though ever so much by hazard, is capital without remission; and as often as they die of themselves, either by sickness or old age, the whole provision which is lodged in the house where the death happens, is rendered unlawful to be made use of, and the funeral is performed with much ceremony, and attended with as great appearances of sorrow as we should bestow upon that of our nearest kindred, or most endeared friends. After what I have observed to thee, CLEANDER, of the politic vanity of the priesthood in this country, thou wilt not wonder if some of these consecrations are built upon reasons so abstruse and recondite, as, however they may afford some kind of apology for this practice to the learned, can, I am sure, administer none to the vulgar, as lying much out of the reach of common apprehension. And to say the truth, [besides that, as a Persian, I have no great opinion of temples in general, which, whilst they give a splendor and majesty to the outside face of religion, seem to me calculated to fully the inward purity of it, as suggesting too confined an idea of the powers and presence of the gods,] I have still a much greater difficulty with myself to conceive, amidst all those refined pretences which are here offered for this emblem worship, that the figure of a cat or an ape can be, in any regard, a fit representative

of those adorable and most excellent natures, when, in the judgment of our wise and venerable Magi, not even the human form itself is allowed to be such. Adieu.

O.

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

IT is with pleasure that I inform thee, noble satrap, of my return to Athens, where the plague is almost entirely ceased, though the ravages it has made, the desolation it has caused in the most considerable families, and the weak and dispirited turn it has given to the affairs of this state in general, will be felt long after all symptoms of infection have disappeared.

A very extraordinary event just preceded my arrival, the restoration of PERICLES to his former authority. Shall I say the people have shown their good sense, or their folly, by their conduct with regard to him? the one in placing him at the helm when conjunctures of difficulty and distress require a minister of experience and abilities; the other, by permitting their natural fickleness to appear so strongly by such a total change of their sentiments, as now to reverence him as their protector and leader, whom, but a few months ago, they gave up with ignominy to the

accusations of his enemies, and thought guilty of the highest misdemeanors.

PERICLES appeared wholly engaged in the domestic concerns of a private life, and was in the height of his grief for the loss of PARALUS, the last of his legitimate children, when they invited him to accept his former office of general. ALCIBIADES and his other friends, whose intrigues contributed not a little to this sudden revolution, persuaded him to come abroad and show himself to the people. They received him with great marks of affection and esteem, and at their request he has resumed the administration of their affairs. His power is already so firmly established, that he has procured the abrogation of a law he was himself the author of, which enacted, that none were to be deemed citizens of Athens, but those whose father and mother were both Athenians. At the time it passed, five thousand Athenians lost their liberty for want of the qualification which it required, and were sold for slaves. The only intent of its present repeal is, that he may be allowed to enrol his natural son in the register of his tribe by his own name. Thus has PERICLES triumphed over the short-lived insults of his enemies; and not only fixed the natural inconsistency of the Athenians in his favor, but even risen from his fall with redoubled vigor; a circumstance in which, either through his superior fortune or superior address, he is yet unrivalled by the greatest of his predecessors, who have conducted the counsels of this republic. Thou mayest easily imagine, potent minister,

that my desire to use every method that could possibly promote the service of ARTAXERXES, and a curiosity very natural in such cases to be known to so eminent a person, would induce me to omit no opportunity of being introduced to PERICLES. My patron and friend PHILEMON, who, from his long experience in business, and his singular humanity, has acquired the veneration and love of the whole city, and particularly of PERICLES, though he has sometimes opposed his measures, has done me that kind office. I was presented to him as a native of Ephesus, who having travelled over a great part of the East, and acquired some knowledge of its customs and policies, and some taste also for Grecian literature, was desirous to spend the remainder of my life under the mild and just government of Athens. PERICLES received me with his usual affability; and asked me whether I exercised any employment here? I told him (what I always answer to such a question) that my brother, who was a merchant of Ephesus, and had great correspondence at Athens, transacted much of his business through my hands, but that the chief reason of my settling in this place was to enjoy the happiness of obeying the excellent laws of so wise a state, and to converse with the inhabitants of a city the most famed in Greece for learning and politeness. He seemed pleased with my answer, and inquired into several particulars relating to the manners of Asia, the strength and riches of Persia, and the characters of the ministers of the sublime court. I found

him no stranger to the shining qualities of our monarch, or the great talents of MEGABYZUS, and thyself. I am not without hopes that my being admitted into the acquaintance of PERICLES may furnish me with opportunities of acquiring a still further knowledge of his character, designs, and the maxims of his politics. Preparations are going on here for the next year's campaign; twenty galleys are ready to sail to Naupactus, which is a port very advantageously situated for interrupting the Corinthian navigation, and observing the motions of their fleet. The admiral, whose name is PHORMIO, is in such repute for his valor and conduct, that the public chose to pay his debts out of the treasury, rather than be deprived of his service. And here it may not be improper to lay before thee a short account of the method used at Athens in setting forth their naval equipments. It is something particular, and will give thee an idea of the military regulations of this people, as thou hast already had of their civil. The expenses of these preparations are not laid upon the people in general, but discharged by a class of the richest citizens, taken out of every tribe: Sixteen are allotted to fit out each trirem. Any citizen, who is elected trierarch, or commander of a galley, is obliged to accept the office, unless he can produce another citizen richer than himself. The former must likewise propose to change estates with the other, who is forced to accept the proposal, under the penalty of fitting out the galley himself. Thou mayest easily imagine that this law (to

which the poorer sort, who are always the bulk of a nation, are strongly attached) gives occasion to frequent contests, delays, and evasions; and before they can be accommodated, the season for action is sometimes lost. Far different are the awful mandates of the great king, which are no sooner designed, than executed with the utmost vigor. They are swift and irresistible, like the piercing lightning shot from the hand of OROMASDES: Asia trembles at them, and confesses its lawful sovereign.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER XXXIV.

CLEANDER to OTANES.

SHORTLY after my arrival and settlement in this city, I gave thee, potent lord, an account of its extent and magnificence in general. Having since had opportunity of surveying its parts more exactly, I proceed now to give thee a fuller and more particular description of them; and in doing this I shall chuse to begin, where a stranger most naturally would, at the place of his landing, the port. This indeed consists of two parts, the Piræus and Phalerus, which together are the great emporium of trade, and the magazine of all their naval stores. Not that even these are without their ornaments; for in this we meet with the several temples of JUPITER, MINERVA, and CERES, and altars to the UNKNOWN GODS, a remarkable instance

of the great superstition, and, at the same time, the little foundation there is for it among this people. In the other, besides several temples, there is a very neat portico, in which is a picture of THEMISTOCLES, by whose advice this port was converted from a court of judicature to what it now is, and near to it his sepulchre also; his citizens being willing to allow him a place among them when dead, which they refused him while alive, though whether he is really interred here or no is very uncertain. In the passage from hence towards the city are one or two porticos, though of no great name, till you come to the Ceramicus, a quarter so called from a hero of that name, as some say, though others give it a much less noble derivation; and in this are an infinite number of temples, theatres, porticos, and statues. Of the temples, the most remarkable is that sacred to JUPITER THE DELIVERER, and built upon the expulsion of the Persians; and close by it is a noble portico, in which are painted the twelve superior deities, as they are called here, and a figure of THESEUS, together with a representation of that form of government which prevails here, viz. democracy, consisting of a number of smaller figures so disposed as to form one uniform body, adorned with a crown and other ensigns of authority. Near this a very fine statue of APOLLO ALEXIKAKOS is just now erecting, as a token of their gratitude to him, for having freed them from the late terrible pestilence. At some distance from hence is the court, where the great council of five hundred assemble,

which is very properly adorned with the representation of JUPITER THE COUNSELLOR; and on one hand of this, another figure of the collective body of the people; on the other, the venerable portraits of DRACO, SOLON, and their legislators, than which nothing can be more august, especially as they are finished by the masterly hand of TIMANTHUS. Near this is a vast collection of statues, some of their gods, others of their old kings and heroes; and yet numerous as they are, they aver, that they are now far short of what they were before the sacking of the city by XERXES, who destroyed or carried away most of the best. It is in this quarter that one of the greatest curiosities in the city is found; namely, a copious spring of fresh water which is the only one in it; and close by it is a temple, dedicated to the Eleusinian CERES, too sacred to be approached by any, but those who have been initiated into her venerable mysteries; so I can give no account of what it contains. Before it stands an ox very finely carved, and the statue of a man called EPIMENIDES, whom they report to have slept forty years together in a cave, and at the end of that term to have appeared, to the infinite amazement of himself as well as friends. Near it is a statue of the heavenly VENUS done by PHIDIAS, in so exquisite a manner and taste, that it may serve to convince posterity of the happy genius of this great master, and be an inimitable specimen of the productions and workmanship of this age.

A little above the Ceramicus is the famous Portico called Pœcile, from the variety of admirable paintings with which it is adorned. It is here that some of the greatest masters in this art have employed all their skill; the subjects, as well as the finishing of them, having given a fine opportunity of showing the extent of it. In the middle is the battle of THESEUS with the Amazons; on one side the burning of Troy, with the portraits of their chief leaders in that famous expedition; and on the other, a large and full representation of the battle of Marathon, so fatal to the Persian power, and so glorious to this city. In this thou wilt imagine the painter would omit no circumstance of doing honor to his country, or discredit to ours: the rout of our monarch's troops is too well and too livelily expressed, not to raise the utmost concern and indignation in the faithful CLEANDER's breast; and though I am tempted by the fineness of the performance to speak of it more fully, as well as I was to survey it more closely, yet I forbear to dwell upon a subject that must be equally disagreeable to us both. Before it stands a group of statues of their chief leaders and lawgivers; among whom SOLON, as he deserves, is in a more eminent and distinguished place; and at a little distance, my old friend PHILEMON pointed to an altar, which he said was the only one in all Greece dedicated to Compassion; insinuating, like a true Athenian, the peculiar humanity on which they so much value themselves. Near this (besides the famous temple of THESEUS, CASTOR, &c.

which I mentioned in my last) is the court called Prytaneum, where the original laws of SOLON are deposited, and kept with the utmost care; and a temple so ancient as to boast of DEUCALION, the great restorer of mankind, as they say, after a deluge, for its founder. Not far from hence is a part of the city called the Gardens; and a street named the Tripods, where are two fine temples, one of BACCHUS, the other of ÆSCULAPIUS, both remarkable for several exquisite paintings, representing the extraordinary actions of the one, and cures of the other. From hence lies the ascent, by marble steps, to the citadel or upper city, of which, and the famous Parthenion in it, I gave some description in my former letter; and to give a minute and full one would exceed the limits of this. The great number of temples, and the still greater of statues and pictures, are not to be conceived: those of MINERVA, as being the guardian and protectress of the city, strike the eye in every part of it, but here in a particular manner. Here the contest between her and NEPTUNE is set forth in more than one place; and it is here that a statue of her in brass, formed out of the spoils taken at Marathon, is placed, of so stupendous a size, as to be a mark for ships sailing at great distance. Beside these appropriated to the gods and heroes, I should inform thee, that there are several other public buildings, designed for places of exercise and entertainment. Their theatres in particular grow daily more and more splendid, and their gymnasia are built with so much grandeur

and magnificence, as to appear almost like towns. And a little way from the city is another Ceramicus, designed and set apart for the burying-place of all those who have done service to their country by their lives, or honor to it by their deaths; near which is an enclosure and plantation called the Academy, to which the philosophers and men of letters (here a large tribe) daily resort, and entertain themselves or their disciples with disquisitions and debates upon all points of science. In a word, it were endless to recite all the structures and curiosities with which this city abounds; and yet amidst all this pomp, and among the infinite number of buildings, it may seem wonderful, that there are none but what are in honor to their gods and benefactors, or for public use. They are as frugal in what are designed for their own service, as they are expensive in these. They build for the credit of public, and not for private luxury; and if immortal natures could receive any satisfaction from the beauty and grandeur of the structures dedicated to them, Athens would be no less the habitation of the gods, than they boast it to be of humanity and politeness. Adieu.

R.

LETTER XXXV.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS.

I HAVE made it my business, sage lord, to inquire into the lives and characters of such Athenians, whether living or dead, as are most remarkable for the services they have done their own country, or the mischiefs they have done ours; and send thee some commentaries of them enclosed. In perusing these, thou wilt soon be convinced that it was not chance or ill-fortune which the Persians are to blame for their defeats; when thou shalt learn, and by so many instances be convinced of the resolute but cool courage of MILTIADES, the steady inflexible integrity of ARISTIDES, the engaging virtues and humane deportment of CIMON; (I mention not THEMISTOCLES, as thou wert no stranger to his abilities while in the service of our great monarch;) when thou shalt consider the great and elevated soul of PERICLES, directing all his care and thought, his whole life and fortune, to the service of his country, impatient indeed of rivals, not because he fears their eclipsing him, but that, conscious of his own sufficiency and upright intentions, he is unwilling to have any obstacles to control him in his great designs: I say, when thou shalt consider all these circumstances, thou wilt be no longer surpris'd that under such powerful conductors, so small a state should have so long withstood and baffled the repeated attacks

attacks of the most formidable empire in the world. Nay, were it not for the counterpoise that these heroes have in the perverseness and folly, the fickleness and resentment of those with whom they have to do, I should not be without apprehension, that danger might approach even the throne of CYRUS. May the GREEKS continue to fight our battles by their unseasonable dissensions; and while they have their CLEONS and their TOLMIDES's, the designs of even a PERICLES must ever prove as abortive as they lately did, when he convened all the states of Greece, and employed the utmost power of his eloquence, to engage them in a league against the great king, but to no purpose. But here I pause, and my soul even shudders, while I recite to thee a particular concerning THEMISTOCLES, little known, and therefore not inserted among the relations which I send thee. It seems, that shortly after obtaining that fatal victory over the Persians, (when the presence of XERXES added to his disgrace,) in conjunction with, and by the assistance of the confederated fleet of all their allies, he made a proposal to ARISTIDES, (who was commissioned by the city to receive and judge of it privately,) to fall on and destroy that very fleet, in order to render Athens absolute at sea. ARISTIDES reported, that nothing indeed could be more advantageous to, or more promote the power of the commonwealth, than THEMISTOCLES's proposal; but withal, that it would be the most unjust thing in the world to execute it. On this it was dropped, and THEMISTOCLES's

friends say, that it was a high love and regard for his country, which alone put him on a design, which his soul otherwise would have abhorred. But can a love of one's country, or any other consideration, excuse such horrible perfidy? No, potent satrap, we are no longer men, when we shake off the common principles of humanity; such desperate designs speak a mind not to be controuled by any faith or by any ties; and he who could so basely think of sacrificing his friends and allies to his country, would not scruple to sacrifice even that country to his own interest or resentments. Adieu.

From Athens. R.

End of the second Year of the Peloponnesian War.

A. M. 3575. Fourth Year of the 87th Olympiad.

The third Year of the Peloponnesian War.

LETTER XXXVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

THE danger which threatens Athens makes its approaches by slow but sure steps. The Peloponnesians have made no incursion upon the territory of Attica; they seem bent upon reducing such cities as are allied to their enemies, whereby they may be secured from their annoyance, and have a safe retreat even in an adversary's country: they are now set down before Plataea, a city in firm alliance with this state. ARCHIDAMUS the Lacedaemonian king, upon advancing toward the city, was addressed by deputation from the Plataeans, who remonstrated to him how unjustifiable the hostilities were which he was preparing, since the liberty and privileges of that city were conferred upon it by the unanimous voice of Greece, for their gallant behaviour in the Persian war, and were in a particular manner confirmed by PAUSANIAS, the Lacedaemonian general, with a promise of inviolable security. ARCHIDAMUS made answer, that he had no objection to their pretensions, provided they would join in rescuing that common liberty

from the tyranny of Athens, which they had so bravely defended against the arms of Persia; or at least, that they would be neutral as to all hostilities, and give them the same amicable reception they would the Athenians; or if they pleased, they might intrust him with the possession of their city, which he would preserve from the least damage, and restore to them, with all its properties and immunities, at the conclusion of the war; and in the mean time, would contribute what might be sufficient for their subsistence. Answer was made to these proposals, that they could not possibly yield to them, without acquainting the Athenians, who had their wives and children within their walls; and desired a truce of three or four days for this purpose, which was accordingly allowed. The Plataean deputies were received here with expressions of the highest respect and affection, and assurance of fidelity to their engagements on the side of Athens, and were sent back to the city with earnest exhortations that no concessions might be made to their common enemy; which so far prevailed upon the Plataeans, that they resolved to answer them only from the walls.

Upon perceiving this, ARCHIDAMUS, (as though it were impious to assault a city yet under the protection of its gods,) after invoking the tutelar deity and guardian powers of Plataea to witness the justice of his whole conduct in the amicable terms he had offered, and the just vengeance he was going to execute for their refusal, blocked up the city. The several

assaults he has made, though maintained with the utmost bravery, have proved unsuccessful against the stratagems or resolution with which the Plateans either evade or repulse them; so that the event of this siege must be the subject of another letter.

If the Peloponnesians have been hitherto unsuccessful at Platæa, the Athenians have been more so in an expedition lately made by their army in Thrace. Two thousand heavy-armed men and two hundred horse were sent against the Chalcidians, under the joint command of three officers, XENOPHON and two others. Upon their arrival near Spartolum (a town of the enemy's) they found a faction within the walls ready to surrender and receive them as friends, but were opposed by a contrary party, who had in the interim sent to beg succour of the Olynthians, which accordingly came and engaged the Athenians near Spartolum. The Chalcidian and auxiliary heavy-armed soldiers were worsted, and fled into the town; but in another part of the action, their horse and light-armed men routed those of the Athenians. A reserve in the town, being reinforced by another small party from the Olynthians, made a fresh attack upon the Athenians; upon which they retreated to their baggage, and joined two companies left there. From hence they annoyed the enemy with their missile weapons, who gave ground, and the Athenians advanced forward, and they continued to retire. The Athenians, through the warmth of pursuit, being drawn out into an inconvenient situation,

the Chalcidian horse attacked them, broke their ranks, and put them to flight. The three commanding officers and considerable part of the men are cut off, and the remnant of the defeated army took refuge in Pontidæa. I have sent thee this short account of the engagement, as it is brought by an express just arrived from Thrace, not doubting but thou wilt have a more particular one by a nearer conveyance.

Thus do the foes of Persia continue to waste each other, and prevent, by their own animosities, that vengeance which they have reason to dread from thy councils and the arms of ARTAXERXES. I know not whether the shame and loss of this defeat will so much affect the minds of this people, as another loss they are like to sustain; I mean that of PERICLES himself, whose health sensibly decays, which, I am persuaded, ought to be more dear to them than the lives of thousands. The plague, which raged here so lately amongst all the ranks of men, spared not PERICLES; that active minister struggled with his distemper, without remitting any thing of his concern for the public. But, alas! how could a frail distempered body keep pace with such a soul? its efforts are too strong for the bands which united it; like a fierce lion in the toils, whose activity is restrained, it has almost burst through its confinement, and will soon leave its unworthy concomitant, and fly to the abodes which are allotted to those who have spent a life of toil and danger in the service of their country.

From Athens.

H.

LETTER XXXVII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THOUGH thou art by extraction a Greek, yet I no more suspect thy attachment to the religion, than our generous monarch does thy fidelity to the government, of Persia. I know thou must alike disapprove the unsteadiness of thy country's polity and philosophy. The scruples thou hast imparted to me I receive as an instance of tenderness to our faith, which you wish to see purged of all doubts. But this cannot be, CLEANDER; the origin, power, and dealings of ARIMANIUS with the sons of men are mysterious and unaccountable; they puzzle the ablest speculatist with gloomy apprehensions and inexplicable difficulties; while the contemplation of OROMASDES refreshes the soul with agreeable truths, and branches out into innumerable paths of delightful knowledge. Wonder not at this, and expect not to have all thy doubts removed concerning the nature of that evil one, whose best emblem is darkness; rather withdraw thy attention, and place it where it may ever be employed with delight and satisfaction. How sweet is the view of an expanded lawn, or the azure field of heaven, after the eye has been fatigued with prying into a difficult scheme, or narrowly viewing some complex piece of machinery? Such is the

refreshment the soul feels, when it turns from ARIMANIUS to beloved YESDAN ²⁸, from confusion to order, from discord to peace, from the author of ill to the ever-beauteous source of all good. I am unwilling to blame thy anxiety for man; yet thy knowledge of our holy prophet makes it blameable: he, one would think, should have dispersed the cloud that hung over us, when he debased the enemy of our nature, the vile ARIMANIUS, who aspired to equal the highest, and had infused an opinion of his equality into the minds of deluded mortals. The enlightened sage was conscious of his usurpation; he questioned his sovereignty, he dethroned the impostor, and pronounced him impotent. From that hour a sweet serenity possessed the heart of true believers; an inestimable solace from the assurance that we are altogether in the hands of benign YESDAN; a consolation envied us by cursed AHRIMAN, which even now he labors to subvert, and leave thy bosom destitute of peace. But let not the dignity of OROMASDES suffer in thy opinion, who can as arbitrarily dispose of ARIMANIUS, as of the meanest of his creatures; and will not fail to plunge him in everlasting misery, for his rebellious attempts to withdraw his adorers, when all the evil he delights in, and is permitted to exercise, will prey upon himself. These are truths, CLEANDER, taught by the wisdom of ZERDUSHT, and are a purer emblem

²⁸ YESDAN and AHRIMAN are two different names for OROMASDES and ARIMANIUS.

of the divinity, than the holy flame deposited in the temple of BALCH. Rest secure, that mankind, whom thou hast such a tender regard for, will find justice; every action will be weighed in the balance of those angels, who guard that bridge which all mortals must pass. Our own deeds will determine our happiness, or doom us to the kingdom of AHRIMAN. What! sayest thou! shall the wicked AHRIMAN be permitted to punish those whom he has seduced? Doubt it not, CLEANDER; they who listened to his suggestions, will have their lot with him. To inflict ill, is an imperfection: the great OROMASDES cannot do it; those therefore whose lives call for punishment, are assigned over to that being, who is the parent of all ill. OROMASDES only draws his protection from the unhappy wretches, and ARIMANIUS strait perceives that his dominion is enlarged; he takes possession of them, as quickly as darkness takes the place of light, when the lovely MITHRAS sinks beneath the western mountains.

Is it not enough that we know AHRIMAN is our foe? that he triumphs in our weakness? Is not this all the knowledge of him that is useful to us? Must we also inquire into his origin, and the reason of his power? Shall we not trust the counsels of Heaven, unless we be made privy to them; which, like a dazzling beam of light upon the feeble eye-ball, would confound instead of enlightening the human mind? When we make any real progress in science, how slow and short are our steps? Yet we suffer ourselves to grasp at immensity,

to stretch the imagination beyond the limits of time, and inquire into the nature of eternity, whether good and evil be of equal duration, and whether in consequence their power must be the same; whether, if AHRIMAN had a beginning, he can without impiety be numbered amongst the works of OROMASDES; or whether the elements (from whence the frame of nature was called forth by the voice of OROMASDES) are not of a generative power, and in the confusion of chaos in their utmost discord, during their most impure mixture and defilement, produced this evil one. A thousand volumes have been employed on these subjects without success; for some truths can never be disclosed, because Providence has purposely thrown a veil over them. AHRIMAN cannot, say the learned, be part of the creation, because he partakes nothing of the divine original. It is most certain, that hateful and malignant being, so repugnant to the deity in his will and actions, could not receive so detestable a form of nature from so pure a cause. It is not long since (as thou knowest) the thrice venerable OSTANES dwelt amongst us, whose wisdom, as grateful as a refreshing dew to the parched earth, sunk into the bosom of his thirsty hearers. He was deeply skilled in the invariable laws of nature, and judged soberly of the motives of Providence itself. He would often say, the elements, and whatever is merely of their composition, have the arbitrary will of YESDAN as a law; they are governed by necessity, and know no choice. Where God

has given reason, he has made the actions of that being free, and the result of reason; man therefore is free, and the most exalted heavenly spirits are free as man, and may chuse amiss like him, until by a steady perseverance in right they render themselves habitually good, and make a nearer approach to their Maker, who cannot do ill. Such a one as those I can suppose the cursed AHRIMAN once to have been, a refined spirit full of excellence and beauty, when he arose from the creating hand of OROMASDES, fit to preside over and regulate the frame of nature, and perhaps employed in that glorious service, happy in the powers of his nature, in his eminence of station, and the contemplation of his immortality. I can conceive him venturing even to doubt, whether there be a power sufficient to dissolve an immortal spirit like himself, (which brought into being seemed to have an independent title to eternity and happiness,) and to misapply reasons, till he had engaged himself in a thought of revolting from God, and (which he still so industriously aims at) of retaining in the worship of himself alone that part of the universe which he superintended. The Almighty would not counteract his own wise decree; he would not interfere with freedom, which his all-seeing eye then perceived to be abused: but from that moment he withdrew his cherishing influence from the apostate spirit, who was as it were expelled that presence which gladdens the universe. Immediately he shed all his excellence; his comeliness fell from him, and he

abhorred his own deformities, but much more all that was fair and good, which could upbraid him with the glory he had forfeited, and his present execrable lot. The wicked conceptions he had indulged himself in were now unrestrained, and the sole good he could propose was the gratification of himself in ill.

Mayst thou, CLEANDER, find arguments herein to appease thy doubts, and justify to thyself the ways of Providence; so as to look with indifference on the dangers to which the nature of thy employment subjects thee; and if they should take hold of thee, to bear thy fate with less concern than we, who know thee, must bear the report. Adieu.

From Balch in Badria.

H.

LETTER XXXVIII.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

I HAVE now found leisure, noble ORSAMES, to complete my design of giving thee a cursory view of the present state of philosophy in Greece; and however imperfect the execution of it proves, let me venture to hope, that by taking my share in this literary correspondence, I make the most suitable return to the letters thou hast lately favored me with, on the hieroglyphical learning of the Ægyptians; a subject on which, it might be easily imagined, that the acuteness of thy judgment, and the elegance of thy style, would both display themselves to advantage.

In our philosophical progress we have already gone through the sect of THALES, and are next to pass through that of PYTHAGORAS. This celebrated philosopher, born in the fourth year of the 43d olympiad, was (according to the general opinion) the son of a sculptor at Samos; but the meanness of his parentage did not hinder him from being educated under one of the greatest men of his time, PHERECYDES of Syrus; who first taught the immortality of the soul. Upon his death, PYTHAGORAS determined to trace science as it were up to its fountain-head, and to supply himself with fresh stores of it in those parts of the world where it seems to have arisen. Animated by this desire of knowledge, he submitted to that tedious and discouraging course of preparatory discipline, which is necessary to obtain the benefit of Ægyptian initiation. When he had made himself a thorough master of the sciences, which are cultivated in the sacerdotal colleges of Thebes and Memphis, he pursued his travels through the East, conversing with the Magi and Indian Brachmans, and mixing their doctrines with those he had learnt in Ægypt. He afterwards studied the laws of MINOS at Crete, and those of LYCURGUS at Sparta. Having spent the earlier part of his life in this useful manner, it is no wonder if he returned to Samos well acquainted with every thing curious, either in nature or art, in foreign countries, improved with all the advantages proceeding from a regular and laborious course of learned education, and adorned likewise with that knowledge of mankind

which is necessary to gain the ascendant over them. PYTHAGORAS, accustomed to freedom, disliked the arbitrary government of POLYCRATES, then tyrant of SAMOS, and retired to Crotona in Italy, where he opened a school of philosophy; and by the gravity and sanctity of his manners, the importance of his tenets, and the peculiarity of his institutions, soon spread his fame and influence over Italy and Greece. Among other projects, which he used to create respect and gain credit to his assertion, he concealed himself in a cave, and caused it to be reported that he was dead; then after some time he came abroad, and pretended that the intelligence which his friends gave him in his retreat, of the transactions of Crotona, was collected during his stay in the other world among the shades of the departed. He formed the disciples, who came from all parts to put themselves under his direction, into a kind of republic, where none were admitted till a severe probation had sufficiently exercised their patience and docility. He afterwards divided them into the esoteric and exoteric classes: to the former he intrusted the more sublime and secret doctrines, to the latter the more simple and popular. This great man found himself able to unite the character of the legislator to that of the philosopher, and to rival LYCURGUS and ORPHEUS in the one, PHERECYDES and THALES in the other; following, in this particular, the patterns set him by the Ægyptian priests, his instructors, who are not less celebrated for settling the civil than the religious economy of their nation.

In imitation of them, PYTHAGORAS gave laws to the republic of Crotona, and brought the inhabitants from a state of luxury and dissoluteness, to be eminent for order and sobriety. Whilst he lived, he was frequently consulted by the neighbouring republics, as the composer of their differences, and the reformer of their manners; and since his death (which happened about the fourth year of the 70th olympiad, in a tumult raised against him by one CYLON) the administration of their affairs has generally been intrusted to some of his disciples, amongst whom, to produce the authority of their master for any assertion, is sufficient to establish the truth of it without further inquiry. The most celebrated of the philosophical notions of PYTHAGORAS are those concerning the nature of the Deity, the transmigration of souls into different bodies, (which he borrowed from the Brachmans,) and the system of the world. As to the former, he held that God was diffused through all parts of the universe, like a kind of universal soul, pervading every particle of matter, and animating every living creature, from the most contemptible reptile to mankind themselves, who share a larger portion of the divine spirit. The metempsychosis was founded on this maxim, that as the soul was of celestial origin, it could not be annihilated, and therefore, upon abandoning one body, necessarily removed into another; and frequently did penance for its former vicious inclinations, in the shape of a beast or an insect, before it appeared again in that of a human creature.

He pretended that he had a particular faculty given him by the gods, of remembering the various bodies his own soul had passed through, and confounded cavillers by referring them to his own experience. In his system of the world, the third doctrine which distinguishes his sect, was a supposition, that the sun was at rest in the centre, and that the earth, the moon, and the other planets moved round it in different orbits. He pretended to have great skill in the mysterious properties of numbers, and held that some particular ones contained a peculiar force and significancy; but whether these were his own whimsical fancies, or the refinements of his followers, I know not. It is certain he was a great geometrician, and investigated a famous problem, which goes by his name; nor was he less skilled in the knowledge of nature, though I give no credit to the miraculous secrets he is supposed to be master of, neither will I tire thee by mentioning such idle fables. This remarkable circumstance may serve to conclude my account of him, that he was the first who called himself by the modest title *Philosopher*, a lover of wisdom only; whereas the sages, his predecessors, styled themselves *Sophi*, the wise, arrogantly assuming a name, which the voice of mankind alone has a right to bestow, and supposing they possessed what most of them all their lives pursued without obtaining.

There are few particulars known concerning ARISTÆUS, who succeeded him in the Italic School, or MNEMARCHUS his son, who had
next

next the honor to be advanced to his father's place. EMPEDOCLES of Agrigentum is at present the most celebrated philosopher of this sect: there are several wonderful stories told of him. He seems, like PYTHAGORAS, to be an able naturalist, exalted into a magician by the ignorant and superstitious. According to him, the four elements are the first principles of all things, which continue in a perpetual flux and agitation, occasioned by two different qualities, an uniting and a separating one, which, as they prevail, vary the productions and effects of nature. DEMOCRITUS of Abdera (with whom I will conclude this account of the Greek philosophy) has made himself famous, by maintaining the atomical system; of which I shall only say, that it excludes the existence of a Deity, and ascribes the formation of the world to the fortuitous concurrence of unperishable atoms endowed with motion. The strange humor and temper of the man is not unsuitable to so strange a doctrine; he finds occasion for laughter in every incident of human life; a funeral or a triumph, an assembly of senators or a company of fools contribute equally to his mirth; just the contrary character to HERACLITUS of Ephesus, who finds occasion for tears in the same actions which excite laughter in the other. These are the chief systems of philosophy prevailing at present in Greece; and the professors of them, while they outwardly conform to the religion of the country, are not only tolerated, but meet with public honors and encouragement. Thou mayst easily judge from

the differences, which are allowed in the most important points, as the nature of the gods, the immortality of the soul, and a future state, that the religion of the Greeks consists rather in a variety of ceremonies and rites, adapted to the particular powers and attributes of their local deities, than in points of belief, and established doctrines in theological matters. Thou wilt likewise observe, on what unstable foundations the knowledge of nature is at present built, whilst every sect frames a peculiar hypothesis, (which has no relation, either in the general principles, or particular branches of it, to any of the rest,) and then endeavours to balance the want of reasons by the weight of numbers; as if the only point to be considered was, how to perplex mankind by the variety of opposite tenets, instead of enlightening their understandings; to overbear them by positive assertions, instead of convincing them by solid arguments. Till those happy times shall come, when nature may perhaps deign to unfold her secrets to the searches of inquisitive mortals, let us be contented to gratify our curiosity in these speculations without expecting from them much real improvement in science. Farewel.

P.

LETTER XXXIX.

CLEANDER TO HYDASPES.

IT was not without reason, my HYDASPES, that when I promised thee an account of the Grecian poets and historians, I began with the characters of the former; since it is certainly true, (though it may seem a kind of paradox to say it,) that poetical fiction was universally received in the world before historical certainty. Hence is it, that fable has usurped the place of truth, and, except tradition, we have scarcely a guide to conduct us in our searches through the darker and more mysterious ages of antiquity. The Grecian history is an eminent proof of this remark, since the earliest era of it is very differently stated by the different authors who have written upon it. Some say, there is nothing certain before the Trojan war; and that no compiler appeared, who was held in any degree of reputation, till above 500 years after it. Others there are, who date from the beginning of the olympiads; and many believe that period in the annals of time, which is ennobled by the reign of our great Cyrus the first, whose authority may be relied on. If thou shouldst suggest to thyself, that perhaps the writers I am now speaking of, lay no sort of weight upon the credit of the oldest traditions, give me leave to add, that several have exposed themselves to the justest censure by falling into the contrary extreme. Such as they who,

studious of showing their regard to the ancient reformers, deliverers, or benefactors of mankind, have overheated their imagination, quitted the common theatre of life, and soaring beyond the bounds of human probability, have lost themselves in those clouds to which they have exalted their heroes. I shall not pretend to determine which of these are in the right; whether the latter, for fear of neglecting some historical facts, have not expressed too much dependance on the authority of the poets and tradition; or whether the former, for fear of giving into fiction and rhapsody, have not unreasonably despised the authority of both. But this we may venture to pronounce, that in all the accounts which have been given us of the first times, it is out of the power of any one to decide where the fable concludes, or the truth begins.

I must own to thee, *HYDASPES*, I have often endeavoured to trace, in speculation, the cause of that error and confusion which prevails among the precarious traditions of the Greek antiquity: and though the search has too commonly ended in refinement, yet the very mention of it at present invites me to put down those conjectures in writing, which have long exercised my thoughts in private.

In former ages, the Grecians are represented as savage and illiterate, possessed of no public annals or records, which alone can ascertain the truth of historical facts, relying barely on traditional relations, unpractised in all the necessary arts of life and government. After

some centuries it appears, that they received the culture of humanity from Phœnician and Ægyptian colonies; by the first of whom they were instructed in trade, navigation, and the use of letters; by the last, they were initiated into civil wisdom, the politer sciences, and religious mysteries. Thou knowest, that the abstrusest and most excellent part of the Ægyptian learning is allegorical; and it is generally believed, that many of their emblematical fables were transplanted into Greece, and embraced with a superstitious regard by the ignorant multitude. The design of these allegories is, to conceal the important doctrines of religion from vulgar apprehension; and most of them bear a beautiful resemblance to divers actions in history, or appearances in morals or in nature. Hence arose the number of monstrous stories concerning their deities and heroes, which the primitive Greek sages (some of whom were informed in these points by the Ægyptians, who had settled among them, and others had travelled to the very colleges of the priests for information) understood and explained to their scholars. But when these stories fell afterwards into the hands of fanciful men, many new ones were added to the old, which defaced the beauty of the allusions, and the allegorical sense being perverted or forgotten, the literal alone remains. Thus the shadow is preserved instead of the substance; historical certainty has been lost amidst these emblematical fables, and the first inventors of allegory have vitiated and corrupted that truth, which they only

intended to disguise. In a word, the mythology of the Greeks is intermingled with their history, and is one principal cause of its uncertainty.

It has already been insinuated, that the ancient Greeks transmitted no original annals or records to posterity, on which it were possible to ground an history of the early ages: but may I not be permitted to suppose, that had any genuine records of a nation, so long uncultivated as the Grecian, escaped out of the ruins of barbarous antiquity, they would have proved too jejune and uninteresting to afford good materials for an history? For indeed what could be expected from a country, one while over-run with spoil and rapine, where the inhabitants pursued no uniform method of life, continually wandering and unfixed, like a lawless rout of savages? Or what could be expected from a people, another while employed in the lingering work of reformation, endeavouring to lay aside the rudeness of their manners, and to exert, though faintly, the rational faculties of their nature? Nothing, that would not have been unworthy the notice of future generations, and beneath the dignity of history to dwell upon. In order therefore to compensate for this defect, the historians, as well as rhapsodists, in treating of those ages, have been obliged to make up in fiction, what they wanted in reality; and the first times are rather to be considered as a period adorned with the fables of poetry, than established on undoubted monuments. But however the devices of fancy

may delight and amuse us, in reading of the dark ages, they could never have contributed to our entertainment, had they been thrown into the accounts of succeeding times. It is there we require something more solid, nor should we be inclined to bear with the overwrought productions of fable. For when the Grecians united in society, and royalties and commonwealths were introduced, we find ourselves arriving at greater certainty every step we take, and the light of historical truth breaking in upon us, the further we advance. Nor will this be a matter of wonder to thee, HYDASPES, when thou considerest that the one may be regarded as the cause and parent of the other. It was good government, which gave life and being to history, and the just legislator made way for the judicious annalist. For as in youth, while the judgment is unsteady, and the principles of men are forming, imagination is apt to supply the want of prudence; but when they come to years of maturer discretion, their cooler and more deliberate reason takes place: so the province of poetical invention is very wisely seated in the infancy of the world, while the order of government was neglected, and mankind continued in a state of nature; but when political societies increased, and civil institutions were formed, the interests and policy of contending states opened at once a series of surprising actions, far excelling the legends of the poets, and presented a fair topic to the pen of an historian. Adieu.

C.

LETTER XL.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe, etc.*

AN universal sorrow and confusion reign at present in this city; the old and the young, the civil magistrate and the military officer, the private citizen and the recluse scholar, join equally in deploring the irretrievable misfortune which has befallen Athens, and look upon themselves as equally involved in its fatal consequences. Thou mayst at first imagine, potent lord, that the late devouring pestilence has returned; that the naval force of this republic, its ornament and bulwark, has been defeated by the formidable fleet of Corinth; or that the victorious arms of Peloponnesus have wasted Attica with fire and sword, and are now forming the siege of its metropolis. But none of these calamities have happened; and to detain thee no longer, thou wilt not, I believe, be surpris'd at so general a concern, when I inform thee that PERICLES is dead, whose counsels have set his countrymen at the head of Greece, whose steady conduct has carried them with honor through the greatest difficulties, and whose military skill has given motion to their fleets and armies, during an administration of forty years. He died this evening at his house in the Ceramicus, of a fever, that has hung upon him for several months, and was occasioned by a severe shock, which his constitution received from the plague, when

it raged here, which all the art of physio, though exerted by HIPPOCRATES himself, could never restore. His greatness of soul and natural flow of spirits made him disregard the approaches of danger: he was seen every day in the assemblies of the people, exhorting them to continue the war with a vigor becoming the Athenian name, and pointing out to them the methods of supplying the expense of it. He used to sit late in the senate, debating on projects for distressing the enemy, and securing the commerce of Athens, or drawing up dispatches for their commanders and ministers abroad. He frequently visited the fortifications and harbour; examined every thing with his own eyes, one while pressing forward the equipment of their ships, through all the delays which the manner of fitting them out here necessarily occasions; at another, reviewing the troops, and strengthening the city with additional works; till at last, as the weakness of his body by no means answered the zeal of his heart for the public service, he was obliged to leave off appearing abroad, and to call in that assistance from physio, which he had too long neglected.

Upon the first news of his confinement, crowds of people daily flocked to the temples, particularly those of JUPITER THE COUNSELLOR, and MINERVA the patroness of Athens, to solicit, with prayers and offerings, the continuance of so valuable a life, as the greatest national blessing they could bestow, and the strongest proof that Athens was still under the protection

and auspicious influence of her guardian deities. During the short gleams of hope, and quick returns of fear, which succeeded each other in the progress of the distemper, all public affairs were at a stand, no news from their armies or squadrons inquired after; and the truth of an old observation was verified, that mankind more sensibly perceive the excellence of any thing from the want than from the enjoyment of it.

The behaviour of PERICLES, in the whole course of his illness, was composed and magnanimous, entirely consistent with the rest of his life, and agreeable to the calm fortitude he had always shown both in the adversity and prosperity of his fortunes. I was myself a witness to a remarkable incident. As some of his friends, not many days before his death, were sitting in his chamber, and discoursing of his virtue and authority, his memorable actions, and the trophies he had set up, whilst he commanded the armies of the republic, not imagining that he was then attending to their conversation, on the sudden he called out to us, that all the circumstances which we had mentioned, were common to him with the other great men whom Athens had produced; and that, besides, fortune might lay claim to part of the merit of them; but, continued he, you have omitted what I most value myself upon, that, in my whole administration none of my fellow-citizens ever wore mourning on my account. We, who were then present, were so moved with this speech, that we

melted into tears, which I dare say a man of PERICLES his sense took for the highest panegyric we could bestow, as I am sure it was the most natural.

I have taken care to send away my dispatch by a ship that sails immediately out of the port for Ephesus; and as the wind sets fair, and the express who is charged with it, is used to expeditious journies, I doubt not but it will bring the earliest advice to the court of Persia of this remarkable and interesting event. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER XLI.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS, *first Minister to*
ARTAXERXES.

I HAVE already, noble satrap, acquainted the chief scribe with the death of PERICLES, and the remarkable circumstances that attended it. It will be now a very natural as well as useful speculation, to take a general survey of his life, to examine into the maxims of his politics, the methods by which he gained and preserved his authority, and to lay open his temper and turn of mind. In doing this, I shall have recourse both to the encomiums of his friends and the accusations of his enemies; and endeavour to steer between the extremes of exalting so remarkable a character, through a mean compliance with the former, or derogating from the true merit of it, through a tincture of the

envious dispositions of the latter. I will neither heighten the coloring of the picture, nor bring the shades too forward; but exhibit, as accurately as I can, a faithful, yet not a disagreeable, likeness.

PERICLES was descended from the noblest families in Athens. His father XANTIPPUS defeated the Persians at the famous battle of Mycale; his mother AGARISTE was granddaughter to CLISTHENES, who drove out the usurping race of PISISTRATUS. It may seem surprising, that a person whose birth and education must have disposed him to join with that part of the city which was the most distinguished for their families and fortunes, should yet, upon his first appearance in business, embrace that of the people, and steadily adhere to it in the course of his political conduct. But very sufficient reasons may be assigned for it: the principal of them was, that when he began to appear as a candidate for the offices and honors of the state, CIMON was universally regarded as the champion of the aristocratical faction; and there was no other way to counterbalance his authority; or to establish his own upon the ruins of it, than by siding with the opposite party. He disdained to be second amongst the former, when he could be first amongst the latter. For the great maxim, which one may trace through all his actions, was, to place his country at the head of Greece, and himself at the head of his country.

During the long and warm contests which PERICLES maintained with CIMON, and afterwards

with THUCYDIDES, the one illustrious for his military glory and liberal temper, the other well skilled in eloquence and civil policy, he showed himself a most artful and designing statesman. He industriously fought out every method that could fix a volatile forgetful people in his interests; and whilst he was thus heated with opposition, and sometimes personally endangered from the practices of his enemies, it must be owned he oftener consulted what might serve the present occasion, than what would turn to the future advantage of the public. Unable by his private fortunes to emulate the generous hospitality of CIMON, he proposed, that a large fund of money, set apart for the necessities of a war, should be distributed amongst the poor citizens, every time they frequented the theatre at the representation of a new play. It is no wonder, after he had procured a law which paid them for going where their love of pleasure alone would have invited them to go, that he should be the author of another, which assigns a certain salary to them for doing their duty to their country, by attending the assemblies, and serving in the courts of justice. Whilst I am mentioning arts of this nature, which set PERICLES to view in the light rather of a self-interested minister, than an useful patriot to his country, I cannot omit his reducing the power of the venerable tribunal of the AREOPAGUS, which (as I hinted in a former letter ²⁹ he did with an intent to pay his court

²⁹ Vide Letter xiii.

to the people, by throwing more power into their hands, and weakening that of the nobles his enemies; though at the same time the interest of the public suffered, by having the greatest barrier against the natural licentiousness of Athens almost entirely removed. The magnificent buildings, fine statues, and other public works ³⁰, which were erected at such a vast expense in the course of his ministry, were owing to these motives; to gain the good-will of the people in general, for having been the proposer and inspector of such grand undertakings, which rendered their city the admiration and resort of strangers, and the chief ornament of Greece; to enrich the useful artist and industrious mechanic, and by such a circulation of labor and wealth, to employ those citizens, whose poverty and factious dispositions might have incited them to better their own conditions, by disturbing the security of the public. Lastly, to acquire a reputation for himself, as durable and striking as the works themselves, which were brought to perfection in fewer years, than most people imagined they would be ages in finishing. One circumstance indeed contributed to raise a great load of envy against him; it was, that in order to defray the immense charges of these works, he removed the public treasure of Greece from Delos, where it used to be kept, to Athens, where he had himself the direction of it. His enemies, both foreign and domestic,

³⁰ Vide letters xi. and xxxiv.

had the most plausible topic imaginable of accusation against him, when they asserted the injustice of laying out the sums contributed by the Grecian allies towards the expenses of a Persian war, in adorning one particular city. PERICLES likewise rendered himself very popular by a useful scheme which he proposed, that a large squadron of gallies should be sent out every year, with a certain number of citizens on board in pay for eight months, in order to supply their colonies abroad, and to sail round the coast and islands of Greece, to collect the tributes paid by the allies to the Athenians. By putting this project in execution, two important ends were gained; the establishing of a perpetual nursery for seamen, and the making of the Athenian flag respected in whatever part of the sea it was displayed. Thou canst not wonder, potent minister, if by these methods, by his commanding eloquence, and by his singular art of managing popular assemblies, he not only stood his ground against CIMON and THUCYDIDES, but pushed his advantages so far, as to banish them both by ostracism. Yet he showed his love for his country in the midst of his resentment; for before the term of CIMON's banishment was expired, he drew up himself a decree for recalling him at the earnest desire of the people, then pressed with an unsuccessful war against Lacedæmon. It is observed of PERICLES, that after he had surmounted all opposition, and got the management of affairs into his own hands, there was a remarkable change in his conduct: he was no

longer so compliant with every demand of the people, or so ready to fall in with their notions, and contrive schemes merely to pay his court to them; but constantly pursued the regular plan of measures which his prudence dictated, notwithstanding their fickleness and discontent; and partly by the ascendant he had gained over their minds, partly by the force of his oratory, obliged them to comply so entirely with whatever he proposed, that the government of Athens, during his life-time, may be said to have been in appearance popular, but in truth monarchical. And certainly, as it contributed not a little to fix the Athenian glory and power on a solid basis, that the influence of a single man was an over-balance to all the inconveniences and uncertain politics of republican constitutions; so no man in the city deserved to possess such an influence but PERICLES. For his natural genius was strong, penetrating, and extensive, heightened by all the additional lustre that learning and philosophy (which he chiefly owed to ANAXAGORAS) could afford; nor was he unacquainted with music and the politer arts. These accomplishments, joined to the politeness and dignity of his behaviour, endeared him to his fellow-citizens; but those which rendered him considerable amongst them, were his masterly talents of working upon their hopes and fears, so as by the one to check their excessive confidence, when they were proudly elated with success; by the other, to raise their drooping spirits in conjunctures of difficulty and misfortune; and next, the use and
comprehension

comprehension of the political maxims, which he constantly inculcated: "As that the Athenians, instead of wasting themselves by foreign expeditions, should contend for the chief place among the Grecian states; that they should take every opportunity of improving their naval force, and permitting no other to lay claim to the dominion of the sea; that they should maintain their dignity and honor to the height, and suffer no insults, however seemingly small, without making suitable returns; because a tame and passive behaviour in those cases only laid them open to greater insults." These (if I may use the expression) were the great outlines of his politics, and will, if attended to, afford us a surer clue to his conduct, than the calumnies of his enemies, and the idle scandal of the comic poets. Is it not, for instance, much more rational and fair, to attribute the war of Samos to the necessity which he thought there was of humbling a people that had refused the Athenian mediation, and were able to dispute the prize of naval power with Athens herself, than to the interest of his mistress ASPASIA, whose countrymen of Mitylene (it is pretended) had been injured by the Samians? Does he not appear to have acted for the good of his country, when he discouraged them from exhausting their treasures and money in distant schemes, against Sicily and Persia, at a time when danger nearer home threatened them? And whoever considers the state of affairs in Greece, some years before the Peloponnesian war broke out,

must be convinced that the jealousy of Sparta and her allies against the rising empire of Athens, and the aspiring spirit and arbitrary proceedings of the latter, were sufficient of themselves to excite the war, without any mixture of the private interest of PERICLES to inflame it; though as there was at that same juncture a more than ordinary ill humor arising against him, it is probable he fell in the more readily with the popular dispositions for a war, in order to divert the storm that threatened himself. But this point I have already explained more at large on a former occasion ³¹.

In his military capacity he frequently exposed his own person with great gallantry; but he was remarkably cautious of hazarding the troops under his command; and he never entered upon action, without leaving as little room as possible for the fickleness of fortune, or the effects of a happy temerity. However, though the merit of his exploits as a general will not place him in the same rank with THEMISTOCLES or CIMON, yet he set up nine trophies, whilst he commanded the armies of the state, and particularly distinguished himself in gaining a great naval victory over the Samians.

Illustrious MEGABYZUS, as thou hast already equalled this extraordinary minister in the extent and solidity of thy genius and the importance of the services which thou hast performed for thy prince and country, I can only

³¹ Vide Letter iv. and xii.

wish that thou mayest exceed him in length of days and increase of honor. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

LETTER XLII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Thebes.

HAVING familiarized myself much of late with the hieroglyphical imagery, in order to gain some knowledge of the sacred characters, it has been my custom to spend a few hours every day among the valuable monuments of learning in this place, from whence I now write to you, which is called the *sacred Library*. It is an apartment belonging to that famous tomb of OSMANDUAS, which they boast of here, (and I believe justly,) as one of the most wonderful fabrics now existing in the known world. This noble museum, the gallery adjoining, and the chamber of the gods and kings, far exceed in magnificence the palaces of living monarchs. Every stranger, upon his first coming into Egypt, is struck with wonder at the stateliness of their buildings; but more surprised, when he finds the most magnificent piles no other than the repositories of a senseless carcase or a dried mummy. But this is the humor that prevails among them; for though the structure of their private houses is admirable in its kind, especially if compared with the buildings in other countries, yet in their sepulchres they far

exceed them; leaving nothing undone, that the most exquisite art can contrive to beautify the latter. And though there appears something ridiculous in this peculiarity, this fantastic pageantry in death, yet upon reflecting further, one cannot disapprove of the principle which may have given rise to it, or which is at least kept up by it amongst them, namely, the setting a low value upon the short time of this present life, and being only concerned for the reputation of their virtue after death. And I believe (though the worship of deified mortals was very early introduced) these magnificent sepulchres have consecrated the memory of many illustrious persons, and in general were the first public temples. However, there is something in this place extremely affecting to a contemplative mind; the lively figures of so many kings, heroes, and great men, as are here represented in company with the gods, in the same attitudes as if they were still breathing, do, as it were, bring down all ages to the present instant, and strike one's fancy in a pleasing manner, rather to be felt than expressed. And though I do not approve of their giving form to immortal beings, yet there is somewhat great and noble in the thought of ranking illustrious personages amidst immortal natures. Around that room, in which it is supposed that the king's body lies interred, are curiously pictured, in several lesser apartments, all the sacred animals of Ægypt. The whole building about the tomb is ten furlongs in circuit³²: at

³² Diodor. Sicul. *other countries yet in their*

the first entrance, you are led through a portico of various-colored marbles, two hundred feet in length, into a stone gallery of four hundred; it is supported with beasts instead of pillars, each of one entire stone sixteen cubits high, carved after the antique manner. The roof has an azure sky bespangled with stars. Passing through this peristylion you enter into another portico, which still improves upon your admiration, with more curious carving and greater variety. At the entrance stand three statues; the figures are wonderful, not only for their prodigious size, but for the beauty of the stone, and excellency of the workmanship, in which the proportions are so nicely preserved, that the most discerning eye has never been able to discover the least fault or blemish in them. The middle one, in a sitting posture, is the king OSMANDUAS, which is more than seven cubits high; the other two, his daughter and mother, standing on each hand of him. The inscription upon that of the king has, I think, justly challenged any other prince to excel him in any of his works. The second gallery was much damaged by the ravages of CAMBYSES, yet there still remain several pieces of sculpture about it, which represent OSMANDUAS's wars with the Bactrians. In the first wall the king is seen assaulting a bulwark, environed with a river, which is generally taken for the Eulæus, that surrounds the citadel of Susa. The sculpture in the royal palaces of Susa and Persepolis is much the same with what I find here. They were both beautified

with the spoils of Ægypt. But the Ægyptian buildings at Susa are supposed to be as ancient as the age of MEMNON³³, who was the son of OSMANDUAS, if not the same person. In the centre of this gallery is a peristylion open to the air at top, and in it was raised a large altar of costly marble and excellent workmanship, but both the altar and the pillars of the peristylion are much impaired. Next is the gallery adjoining to this museum, in which is to be seen the king adorned in his most gorgeous robes, offering a tribute of gold and silver to the gods. And in the apartment beyond, where he is supposed to lie buried, begins a stately ascent leading to the top of the whole monument, over which was formerly a border of gold of three hundred and sixty-five cubits in compass and a cubit thick, but it was carried away by CAMBYSES, and the place is since supplied by one of brass of the same dimensions. Within the division of every cubit are the several days of the year engraven, with the risings and settings of the stars, and the effects portended by them. For the Theban priests have been very exact in regulating the course of the year³⁴, having found so great a variation occasioned by the lunar reckonings. For twelve revolutions of the moon not being equal to the solar cycle, the months must of necessity by degrees change their place, and in a great number of years the festival, which was fixed to the beginning of the summer solstice, would

[³³ Strabo, lib. xv. [³⁴ Ibid. lib. xvii.]

be removed into the midst of the winter. Observing this defect, they saw a necessity of adding five days to the end of every twelve months, which they reckoned at thirty days each, to make up the course of the year; of which they gave an account under the disguise of this fable: MERCURY being once at dice with the moon, he got from her the 72d part of the year, which he afterwards added to the 360 days, which were anciently the days of the year, and therein celebrated the festivals of their gods³⁵. Thence the names of these several additional days were taken from the gods; the first was called OSIRIS, it being celebrated in honor of him; the second ARUERIS, dedicated to the senior ORUS; the third to TYPHO; the fourth to ISIS; the fifth to NEPTHÆ, the wife of TYPHO, and sister to ISIS. The priests, who are curious to preserve an exact register of time among themselves, though less concerned to rectify the inaccuracies of the vulgar, have by continual observations, since those additional days were taken in, discovered that there wanted still six hours in every year to render it complete. For this reason, in their hieroglyphical manner, when they would express a year, they name a quadrant, because from one rising of SORUIS the dogstar to another, the fourth part of a day is added; so that by their most exact calculations the year consists of 365 days and a quadrant³⁶, or the

³⁵ Plutar. de Isid. & Osir.

³⁶ Horapollon, Hierogl. lib. i. c. 5. Diodor. Sicul. lib. i.

fourth part of a day, which makes the intercalation of a day necessary every fourth year.

But as the Ægyptians, by a superstitious usage, which the priests willingly indulge them in, must have their festivals run through every day in the year, the civil year is still left according to the 365 cubital segments, without any reckoning of a supernumerary day in the fourth year. The burying-places of the ancient kings³⁷, which lie above the Memnonium, and are cut by most exquisite art in the natural rock, have not escaped my notice. The obelisks found in those repositories declare their power and greatness, their numerous armies, and the tribute they imposed upon conquered nations. Indeed there is nothing about Thebes of note, which I have not made the subject of observation. My quality in Persia entitles me to a handsome reception every where in Ægypt; but the humanity of PHARNUCES, the governor of Thebes, is more than an ordinary friendship; it is by his means I have had the easiest access wherever my curiosity led me. I have often wondered at his generous and disinterested regard for a stranger, and shall always think of it with gratitude: he courts my stay, and fails not to make it agreeable. I told him lately, I had through his favor gratified my curiosity sufficiently, and should shortly take a little ramble in the neighbourhood of Thebes, as far as Syene, before I set forwards for Heliopolis. Yes, ORSAMES, said he with

37 Strabo, lib. xvii.

a smile, but you are mistaken, if you think you have seen Thebes: upon which he gave orders to his servants that a barge should be ready, when I pleased, to carry me over the river to Tentyra, and that I should be conducted to the top of Isis's temple ³⁸. I knew PHARNUCES too well, to think any proposal of his deserved to be neglected: accordingly one morning, when the air was clear, I passed over to Tentyra, a small city, if compared to Thebes. It stands on a hill on the opposite shore. The temple of Isis is its most considerable building, and well deserves a particular description, if the many works of this kind did not make that tedious. I shall only observe, that the whole front lies in the same line, except one large portico, which projects in the middle. On each side from the portico run three ranges of granite columns, which form a noble piazza, and support the building. The columns are of an extraordinary height, and the circumference such as seven men could scarcely fathom; from whence I shall leave you to judge of the magnificence of the whole. As soon as I reached the top of the temple, I saw plainly why my friend PHARNUCES had told me I had not yet

³⁸ The ruins of this temple are still extant, according to the relations of modern travellers, who say it was a temple of SERAPIS; but as the worship of that god was not introduced into Aegypt till the reign of king PROLEMY, many ages after this period of time, we must suppose it was originally dedicated to Isis, and afterwards turned to the worship of SERAPIS. Note by the translator.

seen Thebes. Here I was raised by the advantage of the ground and the additional height of the temple; I saw the Nile under me interspersed with small islands, none of which were unoccupied near so wealthy a city. Some served for stations to small vessels, and contained the huts of fishermen; others planted with fruits and vegetables to supply the town; and some adorned with the houses of wealthy citizens, and laid out into commodious gardens. The numberless vessels, that passed by them continually, discovered something very new and pleasing, and set before me the whole traffic of Ægypt; all whose great cities lying on the banks of the Nile use this one channel for the conveyance of their merchandize, and as far as my eye could reach north and south, the scene of business was continued. But I was sent hither to take a view of Thebes, an object too large (as PHARNUCES thought) whilst I was in the midst of it, and therefore very judiciously set me at this distance. The air was clear, and a brisk wind dispersed the smoke of the city, which lay stretched on the opposite bank, and rising before me toward the eastern mountains. I had made myself acquainted with its different quarters, and knew its most considerable structures; so was better fitted for such a view, and could take it in without confusion. The temples and palaces presented themselves to me like lofty cedars above the rest of the forest; and I now could observe some proportions in those great works, which before were lost to me, because I viewed them

by parts ; and what filled me chiefly with astonishment only, now showed beauty, order, and exquisite design. Those vast statues and prodigious groups of figures seemed fit ornaments in their place. I could from hence, by my extensive prospect, see the wisdom of the founder of this city in the choice of its situation, in regard to its accommodations and security. Two or three days after I went to PHARNUCES, to inform him of my intended journey : he said, he wished I could have found any thing to have detained me longer, and asked me, how I liked the prospect from Isis's temple? I answered, it was above all I had met with before ; I had seen the handsome streets of Thebes, noble palaces, curious obelisks, statues, and temples, but never could have formed the idea that prospect imprinted on my mind. He stepped out of the room, and immediately brought the very prospect I have been describing painted upon linen, and several draughts of the remarkable edifices of Syene, (which I had not seen,) telling me, these, he fancied, might vie with the master-pieces of Greece, and as I should have an opportunity of making the comparison, desired my acceptance of them ; which I shall preserve with the utmost care, not more on account of their value than my esteem for PHARNUCES. For his sake I should leave Thebes with reluctance, did I not hope thereby to furnish myself with materials for so agreeable a correspondence as CLEANDER'S, Farewel.

L. & H.

LETTER XLIII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

IN my last letter, HYDASPES, I endeavoured to offer thee some reasons for the fabulous uncertainty of the Grecian history in the earliest ages ; and I concluded with applying one general remark to this particular nation, *viz.* that the introduction of civil government into the world , gave rise to historical truth. I would observe, in the next place, that it can hardly be said till very lately, that any historian hath appeared amongst them ; *i. e.* any man who deserves the name of an historian, since most of those writings which are entitled histories , may scarcely be construed to extend beyond a naked register of public events.

What other character can be given of the works of ARCHILOCHUS , or THEAGENES of Rhegium ? Will the Cretan history of XENON, or the Lydian kings of XANTHUS the Sardian, plead admittance for them into the libraries of the learned ? Can the Theogony of ARISTEAS lay claim to our esteem, or DAMASTES of Sigeum be remembered to posterity from his treaties of nations and cities ? Equally fabulous and dry, we can neither reflect on them, after a serious perusal, with satisfaction, nor propose them as models for imitation. HECATÆUS the Milesian, and HELLANICUS of Mitylene, have within these fifty years improved and reformed historical knowledge to a great degree ; but even then it

might be regarded only as in the dawn: the honor of carrying it to any kind of perfection was reserved to HERODOTUS. For if we consider the variety of his learning, and the copiousness of his subject, the smoothness of his style, and the perspicuity of his narration, we shall find that the fiction of the poets, and the dull annals of laborious compilers, will bear no proportion either in profit or in pleasure, when compared with his history. He begins it with CANDAULAS and CYRUS, and brings it down to the battle of Mycale towards the latter end of XERXES's reign, which comprehends the space of one hundred and twenty years. Besides the story of the Greeks and Persians, which is the main argument of his work, he throws in that of other nations, by way of episode or digression. This extraordinary person was born at Halicarnassus, a Grecian colony in the Lesser Asia, not long before the invasion of Greece by the armies of XERXES. In his youth, he retired from his native city to Samos, in order to avoid the arbitrary proceedings of LYGDAMIS, the grandson of the famous ARTEMISIA, who acquitted himself with so much honor in the naval engagement at Salamis. It was there he formed himself upon the dialect of IONIA, and compiled his history. This was indeed a place more peculiarly fitted to his purpose; for as in every democratical government, so in that of Samos, a man is neither biased by hopes nor by fears, and is at liberty to commend, without the least imputation of flattery, and to censure, without that of malice or detraction.

In the mean while he spared no pains to inform himself of all that was necessary, in the best manner which he could. To this end he travelled into Ægypt, surveyed its chief towns, conversed with the priests of Thebes and Memphis, and penetrated into the principles of their religion and learning, as far as his own sagacity could carry him, and their recluseness would permit him. He travelled through the several cantons and republics of Greece, saw the principal cities of Asia, and visited the borders of Thrace, Scythia, and Arabia. Returning, however, after a long voluntary exile, into his own country, he bore a considerable part in the expulsion of the tyrant; but meeting with envy from his fellow-citizens, instead of that gratitude which he expected, as the just reward of his services, he came to Athens; and after about a twelvemonth's stay here, departed into Italy with a colony of Athenians, to build a city called Thurium, near the ruins of the ancient Sybaris. As soon as he had drawn up his history from the materials he had collected with such infinite diligence and industry, he determined to expose it to the judgment of all Greece. It happened, that during his residence at Athens, besides the feast of Panathenæa, where he read over his work aloud, the Olympian exercises were then performing, to which the Grecians resorted in general from each state, and thus he had a very fair opportunity given him to put his design in execution. Many of his auditors had no doubt been personally engaged in some of the battles against

XERXES and **MARDONIUS**, and not one of them could be unacquainted with the principal facts of a war, so honorable to Greece, and inglorious to Persia. In the midst of this assembly he declared, that he appeared before them, not so much a spectator of their games, as a competitor for the prize of reputation; and recited his work publicly a second time with universal applause and approbation. Nothing can be a greater testimony of this applause, than that the names of the nine muses have been given to the nine books of his history; as if the composition were above the standard of humanity, and the joint labor of those celebrated divinities.

If, after a judgment so unanimous, and in every respect so valuable, I may be allowed to add my own, I must freely confess, **HYDASPES**, that I have received more instruction from the history of **HERODOTUS**, than from any author within the little sphere of my observation. Every part of the narrative suggested matter of entertainment to the imagination, and useful improvement to the mind. I considered myself one while as under the protection and guidance of the most eminent heroes of antiquity, as having their bright example before my eyes, and in the future course of my actions attending to the noble principles which influenced their conduct in life. I considered myself another while as a citizen of the world at large; as divested of every national prejudice or false bias, while the great men of past ages submitted to my censure; and in my own breast I pronounced an impartial and disinterested

sentence on their characters. In each of these views, history may be called the school, where the living, that would be wise, are the scholars; where the dead, as well the fools as the wise, are frequent lessons of courage and experience to generals, of prudence and fidelity to ministers, of moderation and justice to kings. Hence every person, in his private capacity, may learn to merit the distinguishing name of a man; and princes are warned, that they are no more than men, and that same is always just to the dead, however partial to the living. In short, nothing can be more agreeable, than by the means of history to accompany MILTIADES at Marathon, THEMISTOCLES at Salamis, or CIMON at Mycale. To be placed as a spectator out of all hazards; to reap wisdom from the danger of others; to regulate what one has to do by what has been done; to foretel the future by the past; and thus to become a diviner, without magic; and a prophet, without inspiration. But I forbear to say any thing farther on this theme: thou must pardon me, HYDASPES, for having troubled thee so long; but it was impossible for me not to enlarge on the excellence and utility of history, when I was speaking of the man, who hath first placed it in its true dignity and lustre. Adieu.

From Athens.

C.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

As I had no particular commands to deliver to thee, I have neglected to write to Athens for some time; and to say the truth, my CLEANDER, thy diligence is such, that it leaves us nothing to hope for on the side of information; and thy sagacity is so great, that it anticipates the wisest instructions of the ministers. Think not that I mean to flatter thee; for as thou knowest me to be framed of a temper above indulging that vice, even to the weakest of princes, it would ill become me, when I am speaking to a man of sense. The cruel proceedings of the Athenians against the Peloponnesian ambassadors have not deterred the Lacedæmonians from sending another to this court in their stead. His name, it seems, is PYRACMON. As soon as he arrived here, he addressed himself to thy friend HYDASPES, the chamberlain, telling him, he was a Spartan by nation, and demanded an audience of the king. HYDASPES acquainted him with the ceremony of prostration, which it is absolutely necessary that all should comply with, who are willing to be admitted into the chamber of presence. "For," says he, "we are ordered
 "by the law to adore our sovereign, as the
 "living image of the Deity, which sustains
 "and preserves the universe." To which the
 other answered with the Laconic brevity and

pride; "I will do nothing that shall be thought
 "a dishonor to my country;" and therefore an
 audience was refused him. However, he has
 had several conferences with MEGABYZUS and
 myself; but his behaviour and his instructions
 are both so reserved, that it is impossible for
 us to learn any particulars of moment from
 him. His only business, as far as I can collect
 it from all which he has said, is, to put the
 king to a fruitless expense, without offering
 any suitable recompence; and to ask for sup-
 plies, without proposing any mutual advan-
 tages to Persia. This request, thou mayest easily
 conjecture, is regarded as wild and extravagant;
 besides, it is not consistent with the political
 views of our court, and the resolution of the
 Persian council, to interfere in the civil broils
 and dissensions of Greece, while the leading
 republics are destroying one another upon equal
 terms. It will be our part, whenever that
 time shall come, to throw ourselves into the
 scale of the weakest; an argument which has
 already been fully treated of in a former letter³⁹,
 and upon that account will more properly be
 waved at the present.

I agree with thee, that the removal of
 PERICLES was an act of folly, and that his
 sudden restoration to the highest offices in the
 commonwealth was at once an instance of the
 wisdom and inconsistency of the Athenian people;
 but as I was not surpris'd at the one, so I could
 not wonder at the other. I was extremely

³⁹ Vide Letter xiv. and xxiv.

pleased with the relation which thou gavest me of thy visit to that excellent statesman, on thy return from Salamis; nor was I without hopes, that, by the dexterity and politeness of thy conversation, thou mightest have procured some material intelligence from him. And yet how precarious is every prospect of human happiness! Soon after his restoration, we were told of the wasting disease that preyed upon him; and, lo! thy next brought the moving narrative of his death. Sensible as I was, that Greece had lost her ablest politician, and that the most powerful obstacle to the designs of ARTAXERXES was removed, I could not help yielding for a moment to the soft impressions of tenderness and sorrow. The unaffected encomium which he bestowed upon himself before he died, gave me the strongest idea I had ever entertained of his mild and equitable administration. PERICLES was above the genius of the city that produced him; for he seemed born to monarchical sway, notwithstanding Providence had placed him in a republican state. Such however was his influence, that though in effect, he settled the most important points according to his own inclinations, yet his own inclinations were guided by the truest discretion, and consistent with the most perfect freedom. Well might he then be revered as the father of his country; a name which he expressed, not in any royal formality of titles, but in the real course of his government. Thus much, I think, thou mayest reasonably expect from me, as a due tribute of praise to the

character of a good minister in the service of his country, and to the memory of a great man, though an enemy to Persia.

The siege of Plataea, according to the accounts I have received of the place, will last, in all probability, a considerable while longer. It is certainly a town of consequence to the Athenians, and deserves well of them, for its steady adherence to their interest in the present war, and of all Greece, for its inviolable attachment to the common cause. Fail not to send the earliest news of the motions of PHORMIO's fleet. In the mean time forget not to inform thyself of the intrigues in the city, and who is likely to succeed PERICLES in the popular esteem and administration. But these things I forbear to enlarge upon, and therefore intrust thee to the safe dictates of thy own observation and prudence. In short, I have nothing to add further, than the sincerest expressions of the pleasure which I take in thy approved capacity for business, and the strongest exhortation I can give thee, to persevere in the same course of fidelity and obedience. Be assured, CLEANDER, this alone will recommend thee to the protection of OROMASDES, and the favor of our mighty master, for whose health I pray, before the morning walks over the dews of eastern hills, and after the sun sinks into the oceans of the west. Adieu.

From Babylon.

C.

LETTER XLV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe, etc.*
From Athens.

THE military operations of this campaign prove a great deal more active, than those of the two former; whether it is that the animosities of the contending states, instead of decaying, grow more vigorous, by the continuance of the war; or that the hopes, which were formerly entertained of peace, being quite vanished since the fruitless negotiations of last year, the various parties, that prevail in these republics, are agreed to give a different turn to their private resentments, by exerting them only against the common enemy.

I intend this dispatch shall contain an exact account of such material events as have happened since the death of PERICLES.

The Peloponnesian army is still employed, or rather waiting itself, at the siege of Plataea, with no great profit to themselves, or damage to their enemies. The last letters from thence say, that the besieged have lately made a vigorous sally, and undermined a mount, which the besiegers had raised to plant their engines upon; and command the rampart of the place.

An account is arrived here of an unsuccessful expedition, which the Ambraciots and Spartans have made against Acarnania. It was projected by the former, in conjunction with the Chaonians and some other Barbarians, who inhabit

the frontiers of Greece towards Macedonia. They persuaded the Lacedæmonians to send them a thousand men, under the command of CNEMUS, an officer of good reputation; whilst the Corinthians and the other allies were preparing a large fleet with transports to join them, and complete the conquest of Acarnania. CNE-MUS imagining he should over-run the country upon the first inroad, set forward without staying for this reinforcement, with his army drawn up in three columns. As he advanced towards Straton, the metropolis of Acarnania, the inhabitants made a brisk attack upon a column of Chaonians, who led the van, and were imprudently marched forward some leagues beyond the rest of the army. These barbarians made no great resistance, and were entirely routed; which so discouraged CNEMUS, that he retreated with some precipitation, lest he should be intercepted by the succours that were assembling for the relief of Straton.

The satisfaction, which the Athenians express at the failure of this enterprize, which, however well conducted, could have affected them but very remotely, is much heightened by the news they received yesterday of a naval victory, which their fleet, commanded by PHORMIO, has gained over that of the Corinthians. The first notice they received of it was by seeing a trireme enter the harbour of Piræus with the usual marks of success. The officers and sailors were ranked upon the deck crowned with garlands, and filling the air with repeated acclamations. The ship herself was

hung with wrecks of shattered vessels of the enemy, and adorned with trophies of arms, whilst the oars kept time to the harmony of musical instruments. Great multitudes of people flocked instantly to enjoy this agreeable spectacle from the shore. The captain, whose name is DIOMEDON, landed and went directly to the Prytaneum, (or town-house, where the Prytanes have a plain repast prepared every day for them at the public charge,) and delivered his letters into their hands. These magistrates immediately assembled the senate; and after the letters had been read there, they were communicated to the impatient people in an extraordinary assembly that very evening. To-morrow is appointed as a day of thanksgiving at all their temples for this success. I have obtained a copy of the dispatch sent by PHORMIO, with an account of the action, which I have enclosed in this packet. It shows as well the experience and spirit of the admiral, as the honest plainness of a true Athenian; and therefore I imagined, noble scribe, that a sight of it would not be disagreeable to thyself and the rest of the Persian council. Adieu.

P.

LETTER XLVI.

PHORMIO to the Senate and People of Athens.

I RECEIVED the orders you sent me to prevent the fleet of Corinth and the other confederates from joining with CNEMUS and the Ambraciots; and hope you will not be dissatisfied with the manner in which I have executed them. Upon the first advice that they were sailed from the Crissaean gulph, I weighed anchor from Naupactus with twenty gallies, in order to attend their motions, and came up with them just as they were got out of the Straits. As soon as we descried their fleet, which consisted of forty-seven sail, under the command of three admirals, making the best of its way from Patræ to the opposite continent of Acarnania, I held a council of war with the other captains; in which it was determined, notwithstanding the superiority of number lay on their side, to venture an engagement. We considered that they were rather furnished for the land-service than a naval action; and that the goodness of our ships, and the experience and courage of our seamen, would be an over-balance to our inferiority in point of force. Accordingly, on the twentieth of the month Thargelion in the morning, the sails were ordered to be struck, the rowers to lower themselves under the deck, the soldiers to repair to their respective stations, and the squadron to fall into a line of battle.

The enemy, observing that they could not escape us without fighting, drew up their fleet in the form of a roundel, placing the larger vessels on the outside, as a defence to the transports, which were disposed in the midst. Five of their swiftest gallies were likewise ordered to be ready to fall out upon us through the vacant spaces of the line, in whatever part we should make an impression. In this posture we continued some time, till an easterly wind, which blows every morning out of the gulph, arising, I observed that their fleet was not only contracted by it into a narrower compass, but their order considerably disturbed. I thought this favorable opportunity not to be omitted, and therefore ordered the signal of battle to be hung out, and the trumpets to sound a charge from the admiral's ship, which was immediately followed round the rest of the squadron. The first encounter was rough; a Corinthian ship commanded by MACHON, one of the admirals, endeavoured to break my oars; but I avoided the shock, and after giving her a volley of darts and stones, bore down upon the poop, and flung a bridge over her, and notwithstanding a smart opposition, entered soldiers on board her, when she surrendered. In the mean time the rest of the squadron broke into the enemy's line, and dispersed their whole fleet: DIOMEDON, trierarch of the *Thetis*, and DEMOSTHENES, trierarch of the *Nereids*, distinguished themselves in a peculiar manner. The former, though he was attacked by two of the enemy's ships, who attempted to board him

with grappling-irons, repulsed them both, put the one to flight, and sunk the other. The latter shattered several of the Corinthian ships, and always stretched a-head after the fliers; leaving those he had damaged, for others that followed him to take. In general, your officers and soldiers behaved themselves with a gallantry and skill becoming Athenians. We have made ourselves masters of twelve ships, and a great many prisoners; and after erecting a trophy, and consecrating a galley to NEPTUNE at Molycrium, returned to Naupactus, from whence I have dispatched DIOMEDON with this account. I cannot conclude, without pressing you in the most earnest manner, to send me a large and speedy reinforcement, or else the present success can never turn to any future advantage. Your enemies, far from being discouraged, redouble their preparations. The remainder of the conquered fleet are rendezvoused at Cyllene, the arsenal of the Eleans, where they have been joined by CNEMUS and BRASIDES, whom the Lacedæmonians have sent with supplies of men and money. They give out, that they shall soon be able to put to sea with seventy sail.

Wherefore, Athenians, let not any delays, proceeding from faction or interest, retard the course of your business, and produce inconveniencies, which in former times have proved highly detrimental to you, and may be fatal now. Consider how ungrateful it would be towards the gods, not to second the prosperous beginning they have sent you; how inexcusable towards yourselves, if you do not maintain

the empire of the sea, which your ancestors transmitted down to you in full lustre at the price of so much blood; and how unaccountable it must appear in the eyes of all Greece, if the victors are not as solicitous to improve their advantages, as the vanquished to repair their losses. Farewel.

From on board the MINERVA quinquireme, P.
in the harbour of Naupactus.

LETTER XLVII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Syene in
Thebais.*

THE reports I had heard of the wonderful cataract and other natural curiosities about this place, incited me to make an excursion hither, before I set forward on my journey into the Lower Ægypt. But here, I can assure you, my excursion terminates, lest you might suspect that I am going further into the barren wilds of Æthiopia, or the burning sands of Libya; and I am not sorry it has led me so far, as I can hereby impart to you some new discoveries relating to the Ægyptian worship, which I believe are yet unknown in Greece, not many of that country having extended their travels to these remote corners of Ægypt. Besides that, they are of such a nature, as the superstitious Greeks would not be much interested in making. For although those who travel, are generally

men of better sense, and understandings elevated above the vulgar, yet are they cautious of divulging any of their discoveries, which might help to undeceive the more ignorant. I had often heard at Thebes, that the people further up in Thebais paid nothing towards the charge of those animals used there and in the Lower Ægypt in the service of the inferior gods ⁴⁰. I have wondered much, why they in particular were exempted, but never could be rightly informed of the reason of so peculiar an exemption, until I came to this place; so careful are the priels and devotees of that superstitious worship to conceal and disguise every thing that it is not their interest to publish. Upon coming hither, I was sensible of a great change from that pomp and pageantry, with which the religious of other parts in Ægypt have so extravagantly overloaded the worship of their gods. When I entered one of their temples, I was struck with the awful solemnity of the place; and it raised in me a devout seriousness, which all the sculpture and sensible representations of the gods had never before done in those I had elsewhere seen. There was something plain and simple in its ornaments, yet when taken together, seemed great and august, and extremely well adapted to excite a mechanical devotion; for I cannot call that otherwise, which is excited by any thing less than the pure contemplation of OROMASDES, when the mind abstracts itself from all material objects,

⁴⁰ Plut. de Isid. & Osir.

and seeks no other temple but its own breast. A few hieroglyphics and emblematical figures were raised in sculpture from the walls; and the Æthiopians⁴¹, of whom the Syenites are a part, ascribe to themselves the invention of it. One figure presents itself at the entrance, which is rather remarkable, but seems placed there rather to characterize the powers and attributes, than intended for the shape and figure of the divinity they worship. It was a serpent with an hawk's head⁴²: but the account I received from them of their religion was this: "That they owned no mortal being
 " to be god, but their god CNEPH; and him
 " they asserted to be without beginning and
 " without end, the maker and governor of
 " the universe⁴³." The serpent seems to symbolize that spirit and vivific energy, which is by him diffused through all nature. And thus, say they, we are taught by EPEIS, our greatest hierophant and scribe, "that the first
 " most divine being is as a serpent having an
 " hawk's head, beautiful to look on, who,
 " if he opens his eyes, fills the universe with
 " light; if he winks, darkness is made." However, in religion I cannot approve even of this emblematical imagery; for by using it in order to bring down mysterious truths to the level of common understandings, we are too apt to materialize in our thoughts the nature

⁴¹ Diodor. Sicul. lib. ii.

⁴² Philo. Bybl. Euseb. lib. i. p. 47. c. edit. Par.

⁴³ Plut. de Isid. & Osir.

of the divine Being. And I am afraid it has but too often led the way to that senseless superstition and worship of animals, which extravagantly prevails in most other parts of this country. Yet it gives me pleasure to find, that amidst all these corruptions the notion of one Supreme Deity is not totally and universally obliterated; and that the same good dæmon, whom we call OROMASDES, the great author of the world, is not only adored among us in Persia, but his worship still preserved even amidst all the monstrous rites and superstitions of Ægypt. It may not be unworthy of your notice, what with much prying into their ancient learning I have in general collected, and which I am under no restrictions not to reveal to you, viz. that the first THOTH, or MERCURY, whose remains are preserved on their pillars and in their sacred books, never so much as mentions the Supreme Deity, who is above all things, or names him in the making of the world; and only ascribes divinity to certain mortal men and women ⁴⁴, and those such as cannot be applauded from the story of their exploits either for wisdom or virtue, and some of them notorious for the worst of vices. But the Hierophants say here, that a second HERMES, at least nine hundred years later than the first, saw reason and necessity to reform and dissent from the false cosmogony that had been introduced by him,

⁴⁴ Sanchoa. fragment. apud Euseb. August. de Civ. Dei. c. 7.

who attempted to explain the generation of things by certain principles in a chaos, without any help from the first and eternal mover. And of this latter HERMES, who was called SIPHOAS ⁴⁵, the son of HEPHÆSTUS, and who reigned over all Ægypt, they preserve here at Syene certain remains. But the Ægyptian priests in general deny that this second MERCURY dissented from the first. They say, he took great pains ⁴⁶ to collect those invaluable treasures of learning, which the first MERCURY left in different places inscribed on pillars in the hieroglyphical characters, and which had lain neglected during the confusion of the intermediate times; and after he had made a complete collection, ordered them to be laid up in a book in the sacred revestries. Though these speculations have much engrossed my thoughts since my coming to Syene, I have not omitted seeing those curiosities in the neighbourhood of this place, which brought me hither, though straitened for time after so long a stay at Thebes. I sailed in an open galley to Elephantine, an Island in the Nile about one hundred and twenty stadia south from Syene, a little above which is the famous cataract; and there ends the navigation of the Nile. The river having passed Ethiopia, where it leaves many lakes and marshes by the dispersion of its waters, at last recollects its scattered streams from Phile, a rocky island on its eastern side; and rolls on from thence,

⁴⁵ Syncell. 114. a.⁴⁶ Manetho. apud Euseb.

till near to Elephantine it is opposed by a chain of rocks that lie across its channel ⁴⁷. Dashed against them and grown impetuous, it mounts in foaming waves, and after struggling amidst the broken cliffs and craggy precipices, pours down from an immense height with a stupendous roaring and noise. But the incredible boldness of the people there is not less to be wondered at ⁴⁸, who expose themselves to the raging current in small boats two together, the one steering, the other rowing; and passing the straits of the rock by little channels, rush headlong with the stream to the amazement of the beholders: for after giving them up for lost, you presently see them again, as if shot out of an engine, far from the place of their fall, and rowing safely in the assuaged waters. In sailing for pleasure about Elephantine, we were much entertained with many rude prospects of rocks and precipices, at the bottom of which are caves and grottoes formed by the continual breaking of the waves upon them. Near Phile are two piked rocks ⁴⁹, where, the Ægyptian priests say, are fountains of unfathomable depth. They call them the veins of the Nile, and annually in their solemnities upon the increase of its waters, go thither to throw in their presents as a tribute to the Nile. But when I arrive at Heliopolis, where I hope to be by the time that the solemnities upon that occasion are celebrated,

⁴⁷ Seneca natur. quæst. lib. iv. ed. Lips. p. 747. B. C.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 748.

⁴⁹ Herod Euterp. c. 28.

celebrated, I shall have more leisure, and be better prepared to entertain you with some physical accounts about it. In the area of an enclosure belonging to the college of astronomers, in this town, is raised a stone edifice, with a spacious terrace on the top; where are fixed in the open air the larger instruments, always ready at hand for their observations; and a great aperture in the middle looks down into a very deep well ¹⁰, which being exactly under the Tropic circle, is a certain index for the summer solstice. Though I am just setting out upon my progress into the Lower Ægypt, I could not forbear communicating to you these observations upon things, which afforded me some new discoveries, and a greater entertainment than I expected. And as I shall scarcely have leisure to write to you again till I reach Heliopolis or Memphis, I was unwilling there should be so long an interval in our correspondence. Adieu.

L.

LETTER XLVIII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS. *From Athens.*

THOU wilt be surprised venerable Mage, when I inform thee, that a city so renowned as this is for its martial exploits, should at the

¹⁰ Strabo. Plin. lib. ii. c. 75.

same time be no less famous for its learning and acquirements in science. Its principal men think they are but half qualified for the service of the state, till they have gone through the whole circle of arts; and it is not uncommon, even for those of the first rank, to give themselves up entirely to the culture of them. They make no scruple to undertake long voyages, in order to enrich themselves and their country with fresh discoveries; and at home make it their chief business, and what mixes even in their entertainments, to promote knowledge. It is by these means, and by the encouragement which is given to ingenuity in general, that the Athenians are confessedly superior to all the other states of Greece, in this respect at least. There is no science which they do not profess, and (what is much more to their credit) no art in which they do not excel. The mysterious parts of learning and the knowledge of nature have been brought to them, though imperfectly, from Ægypt. The more practical arts, such as sculpture and painting, building and music, owe, if not their invention, yet all their grace to them, for whether they have improved only on the rough and uncouth plans brought from thence, or themselves struck out those ideas of beauty and symmetry, their merit will be equal. It is universally agreed, that they have finished almost at the same time that they set about these arts, and in the compass of a very few years carried them to the utmost perfection they seem capable of. Thou wilt ask perhaps, whether

it is on these attainments alone, that the Athenians build their reputation, and to what purposes, besides those of pomp and luxury, these refined arts serve? Thou, who hast been trained up in the discipline of the old Persians, (whose chief excellence was to shoot, and speak the truth,) wilt be apt to despise all acquirements which do not tend to make men wiser or better. I agree with thee, that these are the true, and should be the chief end of all institutions; nor are the Athenians negligent of this. They make it their business also to improve the mind, to correct the will, and to infuse sentiments of virtue and honesty into their youth. And I am the more persuaded of this, when I consider the turn and genius, the aim and actions of a young philosopher, who begins to draw the eyes and attention of the city on him. He has taken a course in his search after knowledge different from all others: while they have been hunting after it in distant climes, he has been confined to his own city and almost to his own mind; he has applied himself chiefly to know himself, and having tried as it were the shallowness of his own understanding, instead of pretending (as others do) to teach every thing, he professes for himself, and undertakes to show others that they understand nothing. In the midst of the most plentiful feasts, he practises a temperance almost equal to that which the rules of thy order enjoin thee; and while he converses daily in the most promiscuous and free manner, he is said to preserve an innocence in his life, and a

sanctity in his manners, which retirement from the world scarcely secures to others. Thou wilt not wonder, if my curiosity has led me to converse with him; nor is it difficult to have access to one who spends most part of his time in the streets and public places of this city. He received my address in the same open and easy manner he does those of all his countrymen; and by a simplicity of behaviour, and a variety of questions, which seemed to have no relation to what I proposed to him, he soon brought me to give up, what I had before looked on as clear and indubitable, and made me own, that I was ignorant in those very points, which before I imagined I had best understood. When he had put me out of conceit with my own opinions, I was desirous to be let into and submit to his; but whether it was that he really (as he professed) entertained no certain ones, or whether he did not think it safe to commit them to one, who, beside his being a stranger, might not appear worthy of his confidence, he declined giving me this satisfaction, and left me neither pleased with him or myself. The mind, which takes pleasure in its searches after truth, yet is impatient, when convinced, that all its darling systems and prepossessions are false; and I foresee, that a sage, whose life and doctrines are a constant reproach to all he converses with, will soon make his disciples desirous of freeing themselves from so impertinent a monitor. Adieu.

R.

LETTER XLIX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES. *From Athens.*

As I find nothing more agreeable, ORSAMES, during my residence at Athens, than the conversation of intelligent men, I endeavour to inform myself on subjects of literature and ingenuity, without neglecting the weightier business of my station and character. It is not long since I troubled HYDASPES with an account of some curious particulars concerning the Grecian poets and historians, which I had gathered from a careful perusal of their works, and the accurate relations of the learned. The humanity of my patron PHILEMON is never so much exerted to my advantage, as when he introduces me with his usual politeness to the familiarity of persons whose company I should have made my choice, could I otherwise have hoped for it. To the kind recommendation of my friend it is wholly owing, that I am lately admitted to the acquaintance of THUCYDIDES, a man of superior quality and wisdom, by whose means I shall extend my insight into the constitution of Greece in general, and the policy of Athens in particular. He was employed some years ago by the city in conducting a second colony of Athenians to Thurium; and though he does not engage in the administration of public affairs, he hath served in the armies of the state, and made several campaigns. I am told, he is originally possessed of a fair

paternal inheritance, and is derived from a very noble family, both which are augmented by his marriage with a rich wife, the daughter of a king of Thrace. He seems however to consider these happy circumstances in life with the impartial eyes of a philosopher, and values the former only as it enables him to diffuse the effects of his benevolence; and the latter, as the memory of it perpetually excites him to emulate his ancestors in virtue. At the same time, he is so far from thinking himself raised above the rest of his countrymen, that he lives with all the elegant simplicity of an Athenian, while he enjoys the opulence of a Persian satrap. His institution in the study of eloquence and philosophy hath been conformable to the nobility of his birth and fortune. In philosophy, he was a scholar of ANAXAGORAS; in rhetoric, he was instructed by ANTIPHON, an orator of singular abilities, and revered by the people for his eloquence. If I may form a judgment of his sentiments in government from the tenor of his discourse, he appears least of all to approve of a democracy. The generosity of his temper makes him averse from the envy and contention of demagogues; the steadiness of his politics, from the inconstancy of popular resolutions; and the integrity of his heart, from the selfish counsels of those who are willing to acquire or maintain an authority with the multitude. He could wish for a larger mixture of aristocracy in the Athenian commonwealth; and yet such was his opinion of PERICLES, that, as long as he continued alive and in supreme

power, he used to say, "the administration
 " was nominally democratical, but in fact
 " monarchical." As he is pleased to indulge
 me in some share of his confidence, I took
 the liberty to ask him one day in private, "How
 " it happened, that he, who joins to great
 " natural endowments a surprising compass of
 " knowledge and long observation, had never
 " expressed any desire to be placed at the helm
 " of the republic, nor had entered into the
 " artful management of popular assemblies."
 He answered me, "That he forbore coming
 " into the assembly, because he would neither
 " be an accessory or a witness to their iniquitous
 " proceedings: That prosperity had insatuated
 " the minds of his unthinking countrymen;
 " and the only men who ruled them, were
 " those who soothed them with fond hopes,
 " enflamed them by false notions, and put
 " them on chimerical schemes and hazardous
 " attempts; whereas he, who gave temperate
 " advice, was injuriously branded as a coward,
 " and thought so ignorant as not to understand,
 " or so malicious as to belie their power." He
 said, "the truest and most shining merits were
 " looked upon as crimes against the state; that
 " they never pardoned him who served them
 " with talents which rendered him worthy
 " to command, and often deprived themselves
 " of real advantages to shun an imaginary evil.
 " For my own part, (continued he,) I have
 " mingled so much of the disinterested philoso-
 " pher with my republican principles, as to
 " abhor those leaders of party, who cross each

“ other’s counsels to the detriment of the whole;
“ those flatterers, who truckle to the humor
“ of the people by the meanest and most slavish
“ compliances; those declaimers, who drive
“ us into strange undertakings, which their
“ betters either dare not oppose, or, if they
“ do, precipitately endanger their own safety.
“ A prudent citizen therefore, when persons
“ of this kind bear sway, will yield to the
“ torrent of the times, without suffering himself
“ to be lost in the stream. He will wait for
“ a fairer opportunity of engaging in the public
“ business, or else not engage in it at all. He
“ will not enter on the important office of a
“ minister, uncalled to it by the general voice
“ of his country. In a word, I have laid down
“ these maxims to myself which the politicians
“ of our days seem utterly to despise, viz. that
“ a good man should be so zealous in his re-
“ gards for the community, as to exclude all
“ those that are personal, while a wise man
“ remains indifferent in his choice of public
“ or private life, but studious to adorn both.
“ Can you then wonder, (added he,) if I
“ have rather employed myself in observing
“ and recording what passes, than in directing
“ and governing? And, to speak sincerely, it
“ is with a view to the good of futurity, that
“ I am now compiling a history of these times,
“ and shall spare no expense of labor or money
“ to procure fitting memoirs for the purpose.
“ The Lacedæmonian archives, as well as the
“ Athenian, will be ransacked, that from the
“ collections of each the series of our transactions

“ may be more impartially laid open ; and
“ however some men shall censure the manner
“ of my writing, yet no man shall question the
“ truth of it. For it is not a work intended
“ by way of ostentation to the present age,
“ but as a monument of instruction to our suc-
“ cessors, as a legacy to all posterity.”

Struck with the greatness of the reply, it was impossible for me to forget, what I had often been told, of the generous spirit he discovered, and the memorable tears which he shed, on hearing the Muses of HERODOTUS recited in a celebrated feast at Athens. I considered this design as a consequence of the same emulation; nor could I avoid, on the one hand, congratulating the generations to come on that admirable history, which the abilities of my friend THUCYDIDES will hereafter produce into the world; nor was it unnatural to reflect with an honest indignation on the other, that while Greece is making large strides in policy, and advancing in letters, Persia too ingloriously neglects the cultivation of both. The former, not content with her victories at Marathon and Salamis, is endeavouring to defeat us in that, which alone can immortalize the name of either: the latter, so far from being animated by a sense of her shame, to retrieve the advantages she has lost, is disregarding the judgment of futurity, and adding to their conquest by indolence. But let us hope that this, ORSAMES, may not long be our case! Let us publish an account of our actions to mankind, and not trust to the partial representation of the Greeks.

Let us plead our own cause before the equitable tribunal of posterity; and though the progress of our arms hath been checked, yet let not the palm in history be taken from us. Adieu.

C.

LETTER L.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS, *Chief Scribe, etc.*
From Athens.

THE Athenians, noble scribe, are remarkable, amongst their other distinguishing qualities; for the great eagerness with which they listen after news. Thou mayest imagine, that this curiosity finds sufficient employment by an account just arrived of a second engagement between the Peloponnesian fleet and PHORMIO's squadron, in which the vast superiority of number on the side of the former, balanced by the skill and bravery of the latter, has rendered the advantage and loss nearly equal between both parties, as thou wilt be better able to judge from the following relation.

A reinforcement of twenty sail were immediately fitted out here, at the pressing instances of PHORMIO; but, instead of being sent directly to him, were ordered to take Crete in their way, on a service of no importance. They were detained so long at that island by contrary winds, that they were not able to join him till the battle was over.

In the mean time, BRASIDAS and CNEMUS put to sea with a fleet of seventy sail well appointed, and came to an anchor at Rhium of Achaia, whilst PHORMIO and his twenty gallies were stationed at a port of the same name on the opposite shore. These two harbours form the mouth of the Crissæan gulph. The Peloponnesian commanders intended to bring the Athenians to an engagement within the gulph, before the reinforcement arrived. PHORMIO designed to avoid fighting, but, if that was not in his power, to engage them in the open sea, where the dexterity of his sailors, and the swiftness of his ships, would give him the advantage against their unwieldy vessels and inexperienced seamen. After they had lain two or three days in this posture, the Peloponnesians made a motion up the gulph with their whole fleet towards Naupactus; which obliged PHORMIO, much against his will, to follow them in order to save the place, which was too weak to make effectual resistance. As soon as the admirals of the enemy saw the Athenian squadron engaged within the strait, they gave the signal to their fleet to tack about and bear down upon them, which they did with such vigor, that they drove several of the Athenian gallies against the shore, sunk some, and made many prisoners. A body of Messenian troops in the service of Athens, who were marching along the shore, behaved very bravely; for they entered the sea with their arms, and recovered some of the ships that had been taken. In another part of the action, PHORMIO himself

pushed out to sea with eleven ships, and was chased by twenty Peloponnesian ones into the harbour of Naupactus. This experienced officer observing that they followed the chase very carelessly, and either out of contempt of the Athenians, or believing the victory already their own, neglected to keep their line of battle, so that some of their ships were out of fight, ordered the few gallees he had with him to turn their prows, and bear down directly on the enemy, himself leading the attack. This advantage was so well improved, that after some of the foremost Peloponnesian vessels were disabled, the rest, frightened at so unexpected a turn, were put to flight, and six of them taken. PHORMIO and BRASIDAS have both erected trophies, though neither of them can justly lay claim to the victory. The ships from Crete are since arrived, and it is said the Peloponnesian fleet is retired to Corinth. The officers who distinguished themselves most on the side of Athens, were ASOPHUS, the admiral's son, and NIKIAS.

It is much censured as an error in CLEON and his party, the present managers of affairs, that they did not immediately furnish PHORMIO with a force sufficient to improve his first advantage, and remain master of the sea. In all probability, if the twenty ships had not wasted so much of their time at Crete, this must have proved a very considerable success for the Athenians. It has been a common saying amongst them on this occasion, that they are now thoroughly sensible that PERICLES is dead. The

last letters from Plataea mention, that the army of the allies under the command of ARCHIDAMUS king of Sparta, being harassed out with the length of the siege, and the vigorous resistance of the garrison, have resolved to enclose the city with a strong wall, fortified with ditches and towers on both sides, to prevent as well the sallies of the inhabitants within, as the entrance of any succours from without; and that after having finished this regular fortification, part of their forces will be left for the blockade of the town, and the rest dismissed.

I have now laid before thee, noble satrap, the present course of public occurrences; nor do I neglect to inform myself, as thou enjoimest me, of the private intrigues of this city, and the secret springs that influence the counsels of this active republic. The administration of affairs, since the death of PERICLES, has lain principally in the hands of a party, who may be said to delight in war; and though they have not the necessary talents for carrying on a regular and well-concerted scheme of military operations, yet they treat any one, who but ventures to name the word peace in their assemblies, as an enemy to his country, and a friend to Lacedæmon. They are a set of men composed of mercenary orators, and other factious citizens, who are enriched and aggrandized by a war, that impoverishes the rest of the state. Every general is obliged to pay his court to them, and to have a band of rhetoricians to defend him against the attacks of his enemies at home, whilst he is fighting his country's

battles in the field. The allies make their applications to them, to recommend their cause to the people, to get their contributions lessened, or an expedition undertaken in their behalf; though the immediate service of the state perhaps is neglected, and her armies rendered useless for want of supplies. CLEON is at the head of these worthy patriots; a man the more opposite to peace, because in quiet times his own bad actions would appear, and the calumnies of others be less believed. He supports himself, not so much by the greatness of his abilities, as by the boldness of his undertakings, and the confidence of his assertions. He renders himself popular, not by the ease and humanity of his behaviour, but by the freedom and roughness of it; which is agreeable to the common sort, whom he likewise gains over to his interest by frequently relieving their necessities. He carries his point in the assemblies, by an over-bearing vehement sort of eloquence, accompanied with much action. There are however several who dislike his character and measures, and oppose both with great freedom: the comic writers in particular do not spare him, but set him forth in the strongest colors, that the copiousness of their invention and the severity of their satire will afford. Of late they have been employed in falling foul upon the memory of PERICLES, and repeating the plentiful collection of scandal, which the very mention of his name gives them room to display.

I cannot conclude without acknowledging thy last letter: the gracious acceptance which my services meet with, is far superior to their merits, as well as my expectations. Permit me to indulge a little pardonable vanity, in reflecting, that I enjoy the honor of being ranked amongst thy friends, and the meanest of the servants of ARTAXERXES. Adieu.

P.

LETTER LI.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER. *From Babylon.*

THOUGH the rise and preservation, CLEANDER, of every great monarchy has been owing to the arts of war, yet at the same time it is certain, no state could support itself without the necessary improvements of peace. The wisdom therefore of our constitution is in nothing more conspicuous, than in the admirable care that is taken to make the culture of both mutually serve and promote each other⁵¹. Without this, the numberless forces of Persia would over-run and depopulate the whole empire. But by a most exact and regular disposition in every district of the provinces, the garrisons and standing forces are maintained with very little burden to the country. The prefect of each district has a list of so many

⁵¹ Xenoph. memorabil. lib. v. edit. Francof. p. 827. E. & p. 828.

horse, shieldmen, or archers, which he is to find provision for, according to the fertility and produce of the lands within his division. ARTAXERXES himself has every thing under his own inspection; he frequently reviews the troops in one part or other of his dominions, and surveys the country at the same time, or employs those he can confide in, to do it in places more remote. By this means he knows the state of his armies, the strength of his garrisons, and the condition of the several provinces. If the prefects fraudulently withhold what nature hath plentifully bestowed, or if the land be not sufficiently cultivated as far as the soil will bear, they are liable to be complained against by the officers of the army, or those sent to inspect them, or to be discovered in the neglect of their duty by the king himself. Where naked and barren prospects are by labor and industry converted into beautiful lawns and plantations, or the face of nature is in any sort improved, the prefect of that district is sure to receive some mark of the royal munificence, and the meanest laborer to enjoy the fruits of his industry. And wherever the troops are fitly chosen, well disciplined, and handsomely equipped in their arms and other accoutrements, not only the commanding satrap, but every chiliarch and tribune, is distinguished, as he hath shown his diligence in the faithful discharge of his trust. By this means they are always found prepared, either for a military expedition, to form an encampment, or pass in review before their

their sovereign. This summer a large body of forces, draughted out from several provinces, is encamped in the plains of Babylon. The natural Persians are twenty thousand, who are honored with XERXES⁵² for their chief, distinguished from the Medes by their light targets and the fashion of their sleeves with stripes of various colors. The Median forces, a select body, amount to twenty more. Thirty thousand Assyrians with brazen helmets and linen corslets are commanded by ARSITES. The Arii and Bactrians make ten thousand, armed alike, except that the former have Median bows⁵³; their general is BAGAPÆUS⁵⁴, the emperor's son by ANDIA, a Babylonish lady, and uterine brother to PARISATIS, a gallant young prince, who hath been trained to arms under ARASPES, the brave satrap of Bactria. The Cissij, with the Sagartians, and borderers upon the Erythrean sea, constitute twenty thousand. The Sagartians and those people in the tributary divisions are reckoned to the province of Persia; the proper Persians being, as you know, exempted from all tribute⁵⁵. The Sagartians wear a brigantine of leathern thongs closely entwined together, and carry nets, which they make use of in an engagement with great dexterity. The rest are armed much after the Persian manner, in scaly corslets, and with the same

⁵² He was the prince royal of Persia.

⁵³ Herod. Polymn. c. 65.

⁵⁴ Excerpt. ex Ctesiae Persic. c. 48.

⁵⁵ Herod. Thal. c. 97.

defensive weapons ; but the habits of their chiefs are enriched with topazes from the oriental isles adjoining. Among them are a body of the Chelænophagi , whose mails are curiously formed of the shells of tortoises. SOGDIANUS has the command of five thousand Caspians and Paricanians , who make a barbarous appearance in the hides of shaggy goats , and are armed with bows and daggers. ARTASYRAS , who by OCHUS's interest was lately appointed satrap of the greater Armenia , is present with six thousand foot and four thousand horse from the territories lying at the head of the Euphrates , and between the Araxes and the Cyrus. A splendid tent was set up for OCHUS ; and he is expected here with a large detachment of the Hyrcanians ; but he stopped short with twenty brigades in the neighbourhood of Ecbatana , to prevent , as is supposed , a second rising of the Cadusians , which may be the more suspected , as the choicest part of the Median forces was draughted for this encampment. Ten thousand Syrians are quartered round MEGABYZUS's pavilion , armed with short spears , javelins , and daggers , and greaves that cover only half the leg ⁵⁶. Five thousand Arabians , habited in their loose mantles of Indian silk , with long bows ⁵⁷ , are placed in the rear of the camp , that their camels may not annoy their horses. Amidst these various multitudes , the greatest regularity and order are preserved through all the ranks. The city of Babylon,

⁵⁶ Herod. Polym. c. 85.⁵⁷ Id. c. 87.

which delights in shows and pomp, was much entertained with the grand parade, when ARTAXERXES went to meet his camp. The magi led the procession in their scarlet robes, carrying the holy fire upon a silver hearth. After them came the empty chariot crowned with garlands and drawn by white steeds with harnesses of gold, which is sacred to OROMASDES, and an emblem of his presence with us. A single horse came next, of the largest breed of Hyrcania in honor to the sun, and the leaders had white garments with staves of gold. Then a thousand of the band of Immortals, with their golden chains and vests of rich brocades set off with Indian gems, followed by the order called the Royal Kindred; after them the body-guard, who are distinguished by the golden apples upon their pikes. The chief satraps and princes of the blood attended about the person of ARTAXERXES, who rode in an ivory chariot, richly inlaid with amethysts and rubies upon silver and gold plates curiously embossed with emblematic figures. From behind, a sculptured eagle, more dazzling than the car itself, spread its wings over the monarch's head ⁵⁸. A thousand spearmen closed the procession. The tent of ARTAXERXES stands conspicuous on a rising ground near the centre of the camp, with the image of the sun in a case of crystal over it. The ladies of the court complain of their being left out in this procession, who have in every signal expedition attended the camp.

⁵⁸ Quint. Curt.

They threaten to appear soon in Amazonian dresses, and try the courage of some in distinction there, since most of the younger satraps, who were noted for their effeminate delicacy, have upon this occasion assumed a martial air. These jests have revived the memory of the ancient Sacian women, who, in the reign of their queen ZARINA, about the time of ARTIBARNAS, father to ASTYAGES, joined in a revolt of the Parthi, and extremely distressed the Medes. And some fine interludes, intermixed, after our manner, with singing and dances, have been played in the royal apartments, founded upon the story of that heroine, and the adventure of the Mede STRYAGLIUS with the Sacian lady ⁵⁹, whom he had thrown from her horse, and conceived such a violent passion for, that meeting with a repulse in his first addresses, he pretended to starve himself, and by that artifice worked upon the compassion of his mistress. A party of the court ladies, with the queen-mother and AMYTIS, were lately at an entertainment in MEGABYZUS's tent, and passed through the camp in a cedar carriage with the curtains of their pavilion undrawn, attended by INTAPHERNES and five hundred of the Immortals. MEGABYZUS performs all the duties of a general, and excites an emulation among the troops in their military exercises, by his frequent presence among them. But to the great concern of all his friends,

⁵⁹ Ex Ctes. Perf. fragment. ap. Demetr. Phaler. in libro, qui *περὶ ἐρμηνείας* vocatur.

though the vigor of his mind be still the same, yet in his bodily strength he seems daily declining. APOLLONIDES of Cos, who is in great favor with ARTAXERXES, exerts his utmost skill to prolong a life so valuable to Persia. Adieu.

L.

LETTER LII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

I HAVE of late been engaged in some conversations with the sages of this place, which have more than once brought to my mind those delightful solitudes, where thou, abstracted from every other care and avocation, enjoyest as it were the presence of the great OROMASDES, and illuminations, which, though no less important than those vouchsafed to the favored ZOROASTER, thou in divine conference hast communicated to me. Not many furlongs from the city, in the midst of a spacious meadow, which is almost surrounded with the clear and smooth stream of the river Ilissus, there is a stadium not so remarkable for its ornaments and grandeur, as its antiquity and situation, it was built in the early ages of this republic, and still retains its primitive rudeness and simplicity. A grove of trees coeval at least to the structure, whose trunks appear like huge pillars to support a thick and verdurous roof, are planted on one side; and through them the cool breezes, which arise from the river, and

are perfumed by numberless flowers that adorn its banks, give a freshness amidst the scorching heats, which we now feel, and form a retreat the most agreeable that can be imagined. It is for this, that the philosophers of Athens with their disciples frequently exchange the Academy and Lycæum; and as I have more than once been admitted to the conferences that are held here, thou wilt not, I fancy, be displeased to partake in them also. It is true, I have sometimes been but indifferently entertained. Some of the first and highest reputation among these philosophers have little true and solid knowledge even of those sciences they profess. Many, who set up for masters of natural truths, are either greatly ignorant of, or entirely mistake the first principles on which they are built. Others there are, who are called teachers of eloquence, but are not able to give any proof of their being so, others, who dispense out lessons of wisdom, not from any stock of their own, but founded on the authority and maxims of their ancestors. But what above all moves my indignation is, that, without any experience of the world, any insight into policy, they all take upon them to instruct their scholars in the arts of government, in the conduct of public affairs, and the enacting of fit and necessary laws. It is true, that these pretenders to science but too frequently meet here one, who, as he is much superior to them in all parts of learning, seems animated with a particular zeal to destroy their ill-grounded pretences to it. It is not unusual to see them put to a

precipitate and shameful retreat by this great champion of truth; and indeed it is impossible to conceive the deep wisdom and true reasoning, that are concealed under the plainness and simplicity of the rude mechanic ⁶⁰. As he has a peculiar art of illustrating what he treats on, so he has also of exposing what may be on insufficient grounds admired by others. By abundance of apt comparisons, and by a most extensive induction of known and familiar topics, he at once opens and convinces the minds of his hearers. Nor need I after this description tell thee, that I speak of SOCRATES, in whom if there is any thing that I blame, it is his too great reserve, and his rather laboring to make those with whom he converses unlearn what is wrong, than to instruct them in what is right. In one of our conversations one day, after he had put to flight a whole army of the sophists, and only one or two friends were left, I was led to express my surprise and concern, that he, who was so capable, and seemed so ready, to teach men true knowledge, would yet be so backward in this godlike employment. I even said, "that it seemed ungenerous, and inconsistent with his usual benevolence, to be so severe, as I had sometimes known him, on those, whose greatest fault was perhaps only to be too ready to teach, while he, who was capable of doing it, would not enter upon this province." He received my reproof with his usual humanity, and after some

⁶⁰ SOCRATES was bred a sculptor.

pause, said; " Were I really, my friend, what
" you would kindly suppose me, capable of
" instructing mankind, yet sure I am, that you
" and all wise men would judge the worse of
" me if I should venture to proclaim it. It
" has hitherto been the chief business of my
" life, to confute and show the folly of these
" vain sciolists: and should I not expose myself
" to the contempt of those, who are so con-
" temptible, if I should engage in their task,
" and take upon me to dictate on points, which
" I am sensible are not only out of my reach,
" but even beyond that of human capacity?
" It is true, that I have endeavoured, as far
" as I am able, to cultivate and improve my
" faculties. I own I have used my utmost
" industry in acquiring knowledge; and as
" truth and science have hitherto been, so I
" am persuaded they ever will be, the scope
" and object of my life to come. But alas!
" so far am I from having arrived at what I
" aim at, that I am daily convinced I never
" shall. I am satisfied, that I know nothing
" perfectly; the experience of each day con-
" vinces me of the folly of the conclusions I
" made the foregoing; and upon the maturest
" consideration I am brought to conclude, that
" the probable is all we can ever arrive at
" in our researches. What can I do better
" therefore, or how can I be more usefully
" employed, than in endeavouring to take men
" off from those idle and fruitless pursuits after
" certainty, which I am convinced they never
" will find? Nor does this hinder me from

“ tracing out, and even depending upon some
“ great and fundamental points. And if thou
“ wouldst know what it is that appears to me
“ the most probable, I answer, seest thou the
“ great frame of the universe, and hast thou
“ considered the various and wonderful in-
“ stances of wisdom and contrivance that are
“ displayed in every part of it; and canst thou
“ doubt of its being the work of some all-wise
“ and all-powerful cause? Can so much use
“ and beauty, so much magnificence and design,
“ so much regularity and order, strike us on
“ the contemplation of nature, and we not
“ own the Author of nature? Can so many
“ beings exist, and there be no cause of their
“ existence? No, it is impossible not to trace
“ and acknowledge plain and evident marks
“ of a Deity, who formed and directs this
“ wondrous machine. It must be that we are
“ all under his government, that we are pro-
“ duced for some great purposes; and when
“ we discover, that not the most minute and
“ insignificant atom, which we see, but has
“ its uses, and serves its peculiar ends, we
“ must conclude, that man, the noblest work
“ of the creation, must also have his. Hence
“ then am I led to inquire and consider, what
“ are and what ought to be the great duties
“ of my life. I try the extent of my own and
“ others capacity. I endeavour to fathom their
“ understandings. I examine into the end of
“ our actions, how they may affect ourselves
“ or others. I find a light as it were and guide
“ placed in my breast, which, if diligently

“ attended to, directs me in all important
“ occurrences. I am satisfied, that man is not
“ born for himself only, but for the service of
“ others, and that there is a law, which directs
“ all to the practice of what is just, and good,
“ and true, planted in every man's breast; that
“ human laws only enforce this, and bind it
“ upon bad men; that the good are not in-
“ fluenced by them, and he that attends has
“ no need of any other obligation than what
“ arises from hence. Nay further, when I
“ consider the nature and formation of man,
“ and that all we learn seems to be little more
“ than recollecting what we have been apprized
“ of, I conclude, that we have existed in some
“ other state. And if we have lived before,
“ still it is more likely (considering the passionate
“ desire we have after knowledge, and how
“ impossible it is to satisfy it in this state) that
“ we are designed for, and shall exist in,
“ another. But I refrain from indulging in
“ this, which to thee may appear a visionary
“ and idle speculation, however probable and
“ rational it may seem to me.” Here he ended,
and I would gladly have engaged him in a
more particular discussion of what he had ad-
vanced. He, on the contrary, desired my
sentiments, which, not only out of modesty,
but prudence, thou wilt imagine I declined
giving; and so our conversation broke up. I
went away convinced, that the notices of the
great OROMASDES are wonderfully displayed
throughout the whole universe, and that the

sublimest truths are easily discoverable, when men make a proper use of that most valuable emanation from him, *Reason*.

R.

LETTER LIII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Heliopolis.*

THE Nile is now risen to its greatest height, and the country in every part fills the eye of a traveller with wonder and delight, and affords the most joyful prospect to the inhabitants of Egypt. From a pyramid in this town I surveyed the distant surface, where lawns, and fields, and gardens lay undistinguished in one fluid plain; the taller forests waving in the midst of waters, and the stately piles of Memphis and the neighbouring towns, with the adjacent pyramids scattered like rocks and islands, to diversify the charming scene. You see in every place life and motion, the inhabitants passing continually hither for business or pleasure, in boats or barges upon the water, or over the banks and causeways from town to town. The further mountains of Libya rise like a distant continent seen off at sea; the nearer ones, that are continued along the banks of the Nile from the upper Thebais, begin here to open and spread away to the East, and present the most ravishing landscape of hills and precipices, intermixed with lawns and

woods, where the cattle graze during the inundation. My happening to come down from Syene, about the time that the banks were to be laid open, contributed much, with the natural cheerfulness of the country, to render my tour agreeable. Upon this occasion there are certain ceremonies observed with great solemnity and rejoicing: and the prefects of the greater districts usually visit all the chief towns through the several nomes they preside over, at the cutting of the banks, and are present at the solemn festivals held upon that occasion; which they easily may, a regular custom being observed of beginning from the veins of the Nile, and so proceeding gradually down the country as the inundation directs them. Above Thebes seldom any but the priests themselves attend. Of this custom PHARNUCES took no notice, when I parted from him to see the cataracts, and thought to have passed unobserved the whole way back to Heliopolis; but about the midway to Thebes upon my return, at a town called Cnubis, which is named from the same god CNEPH, who is worshipped at Syene, I met a splendid galley, which waited there for my reception to conduct me to PHARNUCES. When I had landed at the palace, which fronts to the water, he, saluting me with his usual civility, said, you are returned, ORSAMES, very opportunely to see the ceremonies that are performed at the cutting of the banks; and I shall accompany you myself part of your way, if you will not think it too great a delay to grace my parade.

This year the river is risen sixteen cubits, which promises a plentiful increase. The next morning the galleys were early before the palace; and having taken a short repose, we set out not long after sun-rising. As soon as the oars touched the water, a concert struck up of Persian and Ægyptian music, and every thing contributed to make our passage delightful; the serenity of the air, the brightness of the morning, and the calm surface of the water reflecting the early beams ⁶¹, and interspersed with flowers of the lotus, resembling a bed of lilies. In every place that we stopped at, a black bull with much ceremony was sacrificed to the Nile. We arrived the day after at Coptos, an ancient emporium for Indian and Arabian commodities ⁶². The city stands a little removed from the Nile, but has its keys and warehouses to the river. Here Isis ⁶³, they say, received the first tidings of the death of OSIRIS, and cut off a lock of her hair for grief, which gave occasion to the city being called Coptos, implying in the Ægyptian language *Privation*. From this town they transport their merchandize by camels to the Portus Albus, for Arabia and the Indian isles. Southward from which, along the shore of the Arabian gulf, are the famous mountains where they dig for carbuncles. Below Coptos, on the opposite side, stands This, the metropolis once of a very powerful dynasty, but now comprehended in the lower Thebais. And

⁶¹ Herod. Euterp. c. 92.

⁶² Plin. lib. v. c. 9.

⁶³ Plut. de Isid. & Osir.

here we could discern at a distance the ruins of Abydos, ⁶⁴, one of the royal seats of MEMNON. Next is the town of VENUS and the city of the Crocodiles. Then on the eastern side Chemmis, which boasts of PERSEUS's original: his temple is there encompassed in a grove of palm trees, with a stately portico of large massy columns of porphyrite; in which are two Colossal statues, and the image of PERSEUS within ⁶⁵. The priests pretend, that the deity sometimes manifests himself to them, which is always taken for a good omen, and forebodes great plenty to Ægypt. DANAUS and LYNCEUS, who went into Greece, were, they say, of Chemmis; and from them they reckon the descent of PERSEUS, who coming into Ægypt to bring thither the Gorgon's head out of Libya, visited that place, having been informed by his mother of his relation to it, and instituted there those athletic games to her honor and his own, which were also celebrated in Greece; and the two Colossal statues before the temple are his great progenitors DANAUS and LYNCEUS. The particular ceremonies which I saw practised every where, would be as tedious to relate, as the various discourse our voyage furnished about the causes of the Nile's inundation. THALES the Milesian, mentioned in one of your letters, who is remembered here with great veneration, accounted for it by the Etesian winds blowing against the mouths of the Nile at this season. But though that does not seem

⁶⁴ Strabo.

⁶⁵ Herod. Eut. c. 91.

to be a sufficient cause, since the same would probably then happen to other rivers, where the like winds are known to blow; yet whatever other causes may supply such quantity of water, whether melted snow from the mountains of Æthiopia when the sun comes over them, or great rains falling in remote countries, yet these winds may contribute to make the overflow more regular and lasting, as they are a balance to the waters, and prevent them from running off into the sea, till they have sufficiently fertilized the land. At the ancient city of Antæus I parted from PHARNUCES, who desired that one of his barges might attend me to Memphis: but as I could no longer enjoy the same agreeable company, I desired to proceed the rest of my journey in a more private manner. The most extraordinary part of the ceremonies I saw performed at Nilopolis, a city at the lower end of the island of the Heracleotic nome ⁶⁶. While the priests were sacrificing to the Nile, we saw of a sudden six youths in a strange dress of a sea-green color advancing towards us, pretended to be just come up from a deep chasm in the adyta of the temple. They joined in the solemnities, singing the praises of the Nile, and reciting the benefit that their country received from the overflow of its waters; which was to them ⁶⁷ their land and water, their lakes and sea. Then

⁶⁶ Vide Sis. Serv. in Georg. lib. iv. v. 364. speluncif-
que lacus clausos.

⁶⁷ Achilles Tatius.

the priests solemnly told us, that these their sons were in their infancy delivered to the nymphs, and had been educated by them ever since, and bid them declare what they had learnt in those subterranean abodes concerning the nature of the Nile. The youths, who were instructed in their answers, gave a fabulous account concerning the internal structure of the earth, and described to us lakes and oceans that are below the same, as above the surface; and the great rivers that are lost under-ground, and by hidden channels in the depths of the earth conveyed from place to place, till at length they rise again in distant climates. And thus they affirmed, that they themselves had seen the Nile in a contrary hemisphere ⁶⁸, removed from ours by a whole diameter of the globe; and that the river losing itself in a great gulf, was carried through various ducts and windings within the vast abyss, till at last it rose again, and gushed out at the two rocks by Syene, dividing its streams from thence to Æthiopia and Ægypt. I considered this as a philosophical conjecture of the priests, who are much puzzled themselves about the source of the Nile, worked up with these fabulous circumstances to disguise their ignorance, and impose upon the vulgar. From Nilopolis I could discern the towers and obelisks of Memphis, and the summit of the temple of the sun, which crowns this city, and stands conspicuous above the other buildings, though Heliopolis and Memphis

⁶⁸ Pompon. Mela, c. 10.

both are raised by artificial moles a great height above the waters. The mythological doctrines about the divinity of the Nile, which I have learnt among the priests of this college, are no less strange and confused, than those about its origin just before-mentioned⁶⁹. Nile they call OSIRIS, and the land ISIS, and the sultry heat, which would destroy the fruits of the earth, unless the soil were fertilized by the inundation, they symbolize under the name of TYPHON. NEPTHE is the highlands, which the floods of the Nile seldom reach, and is said to be TYPHON's wife, because they are commonly parched with heat. If the floods of the Nile happen at any time to reach these highlands, then there commonly grow some few water plants caused by the inundation, and these they reckon an uncommon product, and call them ANUBIS. And they hint all this in the following fable; they say OSIRIS begat of his wife ISIS a legitimate child called ORUS, and that he committed adultery with NEPTHE the wife of TYPHON, and had by her the bastard ANUBIS. Thus I may call the religion of the priests in general a mythological collection or system of ancient stories, poetically disguised, and applied under different acceptations, to allegorize the several phenomena of nature. Adieu.

⁶⁹ Plutarch. de Isid. & Osir.

LETTER LIV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

THE Athenians are scarcely recovered from the greatest consternation they have been in during the whole course of the war. Whilst they enjoyed an imaginary security, and fancied that the Peloponnesian allies were retired into winter quarters, an enterprize was formed, which had nearly proved their destruction, almost before they could perceive the blow was struck. It was nothing less than a design to surprise the port Piræus, their great arsenal and harbour, which, by a strange negligence, was unfurnished with gallies to meet an invader, or a chain to keep them from entering. The first circumstance which made them suspect their danger, was an advice brought them, that a large body of marines was marched over land from Corinth to Nisæa, a port of the Megaræans, just opposite to the Piræus; and that forty gallies were ready to be launched there upon the first order. But as in popular assemblies, the multiplicity of opinions that are started tends rather to confound than direct their counsels, they spent their time in debating what the design of the enemies should be, when they ought to have been preparing to oppose it. The Peloponnesian fleet in the mean time, instead of sailing towards the Piræus, according to their first scheme, turned off to Salamis, surprised a fort, took three guard-ships, and

wasted the island. This alteration of their measures, whether occasioned by a contrary wind, or some dissensions among their generals, proved the safety of the Athenians, who being alarmed to the highest degree by the signals of danger made from Salamis, put a strong garrison in Piræus, and fitted out some gallies with all haste, with which they failed to observe the motions of their enemies. The Peloponnesians being informed of those preparations, and not thinking themselves strong enough to venture an engagement, returned to Nisæa. Now the danger is past, the Athenians are busily employed in shutting up the entrance of the harbour with a chain, and fitting out some ships to keep guard without.

The siege of Plataea is turned into a blockade; the Peloponnesians have drawn lines round the city, which are looked upon to be a very fine piece of fortification. They consist of a double enclosure; one towards Plataea, to oppose the sallies of the besieged, and another towards the country, to prevent the Athenians from throwing in supplies. The distance between these enclosures, which is sixteen feet, is taken up with towers, where the soldiers employed in the blockade are quartered. There is also a deep ditch filled with water, that is carried round the work.

Thou must already be informed of the war just broke out between PERDICCAS, king of Macedon, and SITALCES, king of Thrace, in which the Athenians are auxiliaries to the latter; and have engaged to send a fleet to

support him in his project of setting AMYNTAS, the son of PHILIP, brother to PERDICCAS, on his uncle's throne. The Thracian monarch has raised a very numerous army, not less than one hundred and fifty thousand men, out of his own subjects, and the nations his allies. He is marched at the head of it to invade Macedon, carrying along with him the young AMYNTAS, whom he treats as a king. PERDICCAS, sensible of his inability to keep the field against so superior a force, has thrown the best of his infantry into his strongest places, and contents himself with harassing the enemy, defending the passes, and laying waste the country, to deprive them of subsistence by means of his cavalry, which are excellent. SITALCES has notwithstanding made a considerable progress already. Womene, a frontier town, which ventured to stand a siege, he carried by storm; and several others, as Mygdonia, Griftonia, and Anthemus, have surrendered without opposition, out of regard to the memory of PHILIP, whose inheritance they once were. The Athenians think it a very seasonable and useful diversion; for they are well assured, that the Macedonian king was on the point of entering a second time into the confederacy against them, if this war had not reduced him to a state of self-defence.

I am next, noble scribe, to open to thee an affair, which I enter upon with no small reluctance, as well upon account of the person it concerns, whose fortunes, honor, and life will be nearly affected by what I shall lay

before thee, as because I am sensible, how unwilling the humanity of thy temper renders thee to reveal what must prejudice another, and how strongly at the same time thy singular fidelity must be moved at any act of treachery in those that approach the sacred person of the king. To detain thee no longer in suspense, I have discovered a treasonable correspondence of SACAS, the eunuch, chamberlain to the women's apartment, which I came to the knowledge of in the following manner: Upon PERICLES's death, the papers and letters relating to public affairs, which he had in his possession, were ordered by a decree of the senate to be deposited in the archives of the state. I found means to obtain a sight of them from the scribe of the assembly, in whose hands they were deposited; and thou mayest imagine how surpris'd I was, to discover amongst them a correspondence between PERICLES and SACAS, which began the year after the peace made with CIMON, and continued ever since with little interruption. Thou canst remember, that soon after that peace was signed, the Athenians sent ambassadors to the Persian court, who, as it appears from these letters, engaged this unfortunate eunuch in the interest of Athens. He makes strong professions in his letters, that nothing could have engaged him in the service, but the remembrance of his Grecian extraction; for thou knowest he was stolen from the coast of Eubœa by Phœnician pirates, who infested the Ægean sea. His letters chiefly turn upon the news and ordinary occurrences of the court; but there

is no one point which he inculcates more strongly, than the advantages which Greece may gain by exciting the Grecian provinces to revolt, and the facility of putting any such project in execution. He represents, that to erect principalities in the heart of the Persian dominions, under the protection of the Grecian states, would be the surest barrier for the latter against any attempt of the former: that most of the governors would want very little encouragement to set up for themselves; some conscious of their own mal-administration, others incited from motives of disappointed ambition, or private injuries: that the people, harassed with taxes, and groaning under an oppressive government, would readily join in the revolt; especially if fair offers of liberty and Grecian protection were laid before them. He names ARGESTES, the late governor of Lydia, and MAZEUS, the governor of Phrygia, as particularly inclined to revolt: that the latter he was well acquainted with, and knew that five hundred talents, and a squadron of Athenian ships, would at any time bring him into the field. In one of his letters he uses the following remarkable expressions: "When once
" the fire of sedition is kindled, and blown
" up into a flame, it will spread from one
" province to another, from the frontiers to the
" centre of the empire. The Medes themselves
" may perhaps make a bold struggle to recover
" the monarchy of Asia; for I do not say it
" without good foundation, many of our satraps
" cannot forget that the blood of PHRAORTES

“ and ASTYAGES runs in their veins.” The traitor, not contented with disclosing the counsels of Persia, would involve the whole empire in blood and confusion, and overturn the throne of that prince, by whose goodness his fortunes were rendered not only easy but splendid, and himself raised from a state of servitude to a station near the royal person. The execrable treason of SACAS, illustrious minister, should be punished with the most exemplary severity, and transmitted down to our posterity in the same striking manner with the practices of ARTHMIUS of Zelis against Athens. That subtle emissary was sent into Greece with large sums of money to foment the divisions of Athens and Sparta; but his intrigues being discovered, a brazen column was erected in the citadel of this city, and the following inscription engraven upon it by a decree of the people:

“ ARTHMIUS of Zelis, the son of PYTHONAX,
“ is declared infamous and accursed, a public
“ enemy of Athens and her allies, for having
“ brought the gold of Media into Peloponnesus;
“ and let all his posterity be involved in this
“ execration.”

P.

LETTER LV.

CLEANDER to HIPPIAS.

I ENGAGED lately in conversation with an Athenian, on the subject of the extraordinary victories obtained by Greece over XERXES and his generals. Surely, said I, there must be some secret enchantment in the sound of liberty, which could inspire a handful of men with resolution enough to oppose, and even defeat, the formidable millions of Asia. A free people, answered he, will always borrow courage from despair. In that important juncture, the Grecians had nothing to expect but from their own valor, and every thing to fear from the power of their enemies. Inured from their infancy to the toils of war, and the cultivation of a barren soil; they were easily enabled, from a sort of constitutional vigor, to overcome the effeminate voluptuaries of the east. Well educated in an honest simplicity of manners, they despised and bore up against the terrible menaces of oppression. An undaunted greatness of mind is incompatible with servile restraint or timorous dependance, and the name of country cannot warm the heart of those who enjoy none. What reason has a slave to be prodigal of life? Does the event of a battle, decisive to the interests of his lord, grow doubtful? Unconcerned for the issue of the day, he either surrenders to the enemy at discretion, or endeavours to fly from the danger.

As he has no reputation to lose, he considers that he has none to hope for. He is sensible, that he exposes himself only for the security of a tyrant; nor can he expect those rewards which are the proper attendants on virtue. To such an one, a change of governors seems absolutely indifferent, nay, rather desirable; since he may entertain thoughts of bettering his condition under a new master, from the impossibility that it can ever be altered for the worse under any. But who is he, that can rightly be prodigal of life? It is the inhabitant of a commonwealth, one jealous of his fame and his freedom, and justly preferring death with honor to life with ignominy. As he is an happy man, the apprehension of a change alarms him; he prudently guards against the approach of it, and bravely defends his own and the public welfare in opposing it. He then becomes a benefactor to the state, and the gratitude of the state is his due; a gratitude unmixed with the base alloy of envy, and flowing from the hearts of his citizens. The subjects of the king of Persia — Methinks, said I, interrupting him, I know your sentiment before you utter it; but will not the munificence of the king of Persia toward the vassals who distinguish themselves in his service, make amends for liberty, and prove as strong an inducement to the laudable exercise of valor? Besides this, the awe of his power is a spur to action, no where to be found in a free republic. — You are mistaken, answered he; laws, as they are steady and uniform, command a more sacred

reverence than arbitrary power. The Greeks know what penalties they incur in offending against the constitution of their country: the Asiatics are in a precarious subjection to the humor of a master; and those obey with pleasure, but these with reluctance. It was not intended by Providence, that the human race should suffer itself to be loaded with the shackles of oppression; and the tempers of a people must be long and painfully broken to it, before they can be able to bear it; for nature in this, as well as other instances, is apt to recoil stubbornly on the man who warps it. True valor is only the companion of liberty; hence is it, that the Grecians in the field of battle are animated by an eagerness to defend their dearest possessions, which raises their courage in the very crisis when it is most wanted. The slaves of Persia are pressed on to fight by the iron rod of arbitrary chastisement, which extinguishes every spark of their courage, while they are engaging in a scene of action that requires their utmost. In a word, the fear of punishment can never maintain its ground against the generous enthusiasm of freedom; since it is not the power of a prince which can force, but it is every man's zeal for his own preservation, which must excite to the efforts of valor. Lives there a Grecian insensible that the interest of individuals is contained in that of the whole? No, and it is the sense of this truth, which puts every individual on contributing to secure the whole. This principle, CLEANDER, is more extensive in its influence, than the most powerful

monarch of the earth; and the spirit of liberty will exert itself to defend the enjoyments of liberty. — Here my Athenian ended, and I made no reply. The blood rose into my countenance upon hearing his reproaches: I was vexed at his disregard for the constitution of Persia, but afraid to betray my peculiar attachment to it. I excused my confusion, however, by telling him, that I had forgot some business, which was the cause of it, and appointed to give him another meeting. Forgive, dearest HIPPIAS, the weakness of thy brother, if he was much troubled at the severity of these reflections; yet why should he blame their severity, when, alas! he had more reason to be troubled at the truth of them? Adieu.

From Athens.

C.

LETTER LVI.

CLEANDER to HIPPIAS.

THE next day I saw my friend again, and we resumed the subject of liberty. If I mistake not, said I to him, you seemed to think, the last time I conversed with you, that a man of merit could never be sure of his reward under a monarch; that he was in a precarious subjection, as you expressed it, to the humor of a master: but can any thing be more capricious than the favor of a popular state? In Athens, let an honest citizen have done any extraordinary service to-day, he knows not but he may be

banished for it to-morrow. And forasmuch as the mind of a multitude is more flux and variable than the temper of a prudent prince, a dependence on the esteem of the former must be much more uncertain, than a confidence in the goodness of the latter: besides, the jealousies and particular interests of private persons will frequently make a great impression on the inclinations of a whole community. Is the military glory of THEMISTOCLES to be disgraced, the political wisdom of PERICLES despised, or the upright integrity of ARISTIDES reviled? The whimsical *many*, who weigh none of their resolutions in the scale of reason, fall naturally in with the proposition. These admired ministers are degraded, and exiled from their country. For what? To make room for the very dregs and refuse of the people; to admit mere demagogues instead of able politicians, and to exchange the true prudence and sound eloquence of the one, for the shallow schemes and false oratory of the other. — The law of ostracism, answered he, which you would insinuate to be so baneful to the Athenian interests, is a very excellent and wise institution, and may be considered as a strong bulwark to defend and protect the purity of a republican government. It is not lightly nor wantonly put in execution, since there must be at least six thousand citizens concurring to the punishment. Equality is the very life of a commonwealth; and you must allow, that by the maxims of a jealous state some alarm may reasonably be taken at superior merit. A

soul so elevated is thought incapable of moderation, and a desire of glory so passionate is hardly to be distinguished from a dangerous ambition. The Athenians have always been desirous of curbing those who have pushed themselves too forward; of reducing them into the same rank with their countrymen, from which perhaps they were at first unavoidably advanced by the pre-eminence of their characters, or the necessity of the times. They remember the tyranny of PISISTRATUS and his sons, who were formerly no more than plain citizens on a level with the rest: they hold always in view the fate of Ephesus and other Grecian colonies: they bear in memory the aspiring temper of PAUSANIAS in Lacedæmon; and how were it possible to divine, but that THEMISTOCLES, ARISTIDES, CIMON, and PERICLES, would embroil their city in dissension, and treat it in the same manner? This kind of banishment hath nothing shameful or dishonorable; it is not termed the punishment of iniquity, but is in fact the depression of exalted power. It may be styled a gentle mitigation of envy; for by fixing this disgrace upon a supreme officer in the commonwealth, the sting of malice can injure him no farther, and the arrows of hatred, which were pointed at him, lose their force. It is a sure method of quieting the minds of the people, and prevents them from proceeding to measures of more violence against the exile. He is suffered to enjoy his estate without forfeiture; he possesses the rights and privileges of a citizen, with

hopes, in the interim, of being re-established in authority. Thus thou mayest observe, that a man is not at once discarded by this law from the protection of his country; none of the links which attach him to her interest are broken; he need not therefore resort for succour to the resolutions of despair. Hence it is, that the persons whose names I have recited, never entered into any unjust confederacies against their native Athens, but on the contrary preserved an unshaken fidelity in its service. Again, this custom of ostracism hath a further good consequence, that it effectually secures us from civil war and bloodshed. Are there several who struggle at the same time for superiority? Do they endeavour to distract the commonwealth by different parties? There seems no way so effectual to deliver the constitution from destruction, as the sending those out of its bosom, who can lay no restraint on their ambition. Hence the frame of the republic is entire; for, from the apprehension of this law, our considerable citizens apply all their abilities to increase the prosperity of the state, instead of supporting their personal power; they strive to aggrandize that, and their emulation is by this means converted to laudable pursuits. If the people take offence at their conduct, they are dismissed for a term of years in the way already mentioned. They have time given them to reflect coolly on their rashness, and instruct themselves, from the feeling lessons of experience, in the vanity of every competition, except that which every honest man should engage in; I

mean contending, who shall most contribute to the welfare of their country. — Yes, replied I, interrupting him, I understand what you mean. The enemies of a great man are pleased to honor the unworthy ends of their malice with the name of political wisdom; and the people of Athens are so good as to indulge them in saying, they were afraid of his ambition, when in truth they were envious of his reputation. However, to do you justice, you have urged more on behalf of the law, than I ever yet heard, or than I believed the matter would bear. But I beseech you, what suspicion could you possibly entertain of THEMISTOCLES, who had done so much to save the common liberties of Greece; who is even thought to have poisoned himself in the court of ARTAXERXES, because he would not engage in any enterprise to the prejudice of his country? What umbrage could the generosity of CIMON give to the Athenians, who seems to have been so strongly touched with the principles of benevolence, that he would have scorned to raise his own power on the ruins of a free republic? And what could you fear from the sanctity of ARISTIDES, who administered the money of all Greece with that disinterestedness which becomes a man intrusted with the treasures of another; with that diligence which one usually exercises in the management of one's own affairs; who gained love and esteem in that office, which is generally exposed to odium? Happy Athens! that couldst find a good man zealous in thy service, after the banishment of ARISTIDES,

with whom goodness itself was exiled! Surely when so many, and I may say only virtuous, ministers have suffered by the law of ostracism, it is high time to abolish this wretched tool of faction and sedition. A tree may be judged of from the fruit that it produces, and a law may be known by the effects derived from it. — Without doubt, interposed he, there is truth in what you say, but it is truth carried too far. No law can be made to suit every particular case. The legislator must consult for that, which upon the whole is right. The wisest institutions are often attended with inconveniencies, and can you wonder, that the best law should sometimes be followed by the worst mischiefs? — No, returned I with some warmth, no mischiefs are to be wondered at in that state, where a man's merit, instead of gaining him the love of his citizens, recommends him to nothing but disgrace. Good heavens! can there be a surer sign of universal frenzy in a commonwealth, than the punishing of great virtues with a severity only due to the basest of vices; and rewarding high services and the noblest achievements with such black unthankfulness? Are ye not ashamed to punish this crime by law, wherever it is found in private persons, and yet permit the imputation to remain upon the public? Could your state be tried by any other city, and called to an account for its usage of these excellent patriots, your subtilties would stand you in no stead, nor could your orators invent an answer. At present indeed you are secure from the censure
or

or resentment of the illustrious shades, who were injured by your ancestors. No murmurs of complaint are heard amongst them; but notwithstanding their tongues are silenced by the necessity of the grave, all ages and nations will agree to curse the barefaced ingratitude of Athens. Adieu.

From Athens.

C.

End of the third Year of the Peloponnesian War.

*A. M. 3576. First Year of the 88th Olympiad.
The fourth Year of the Peloponnesian War.*

LETTER LVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Athens.*

IN a former letter ⁷⁰, noble scribe, I laid before thee some account of the three chief branches of the Athenian constitution, the senate of five hundred, the assembly of the people, and the Areopagus. The subject is so far from being exhausted, that I shall proceed to give thee a further view into the nature of their civil government, and the different jurisdictions of the magistrates. Thou must have already observed, that the form of all these republican constitutions is complex, and the legislative as well as executive power divided into a great number of hands, in order to preserve that equality of conditions, and rotation of authority, which they look upon as the basis and chief security of their liberties.

The nine Archons, with all the other magistrates of the state, enter upon their respective charges the first day of the month Hecatombæon, which begins the year, and is

⁷⁰ Letter xlii.

celebrated with solemn sacrifices, and all other expressions of rejoicing.

The Archons are elected by lot; but before they are admitted to the exercise of their offices, are obliged to undergo a double examination in the senate and forum, and to take a very strict oath in the royal portico. The first in the commission, who by way of pre-eminence is called the Archon, gives name to the year, determines in all causes of wills and legacies, and regulates the diversions of the theatre. To the second, (who probably in memory of their kings is styled Basileus,) the care of religion, the conduct of the priests, and the inspection of the Eleusinian mysteries are committed. The Polemarchus, or general, who is the third, has under his management the discipline of the troops, and the care of the strangers residing at Athens, over whom he exercises a kind of judicial authority. Six go under the common title of Thesmothetæ, and are the guardians of the laws. It is their duty to see, that none are enacted but such as conduce to the public good. All controversies in matters of trade fall under their cognizance, and they have the honorable distinction of registering public leagues and contracts. If either of the three principal magistrates, by reason of his youth, is less skilled in the laws and customs of his country, it is usual for him to chuse two persons of age, experience, and reputation, as his assistants, who are called Paredroi. The Nomothetæ are a thousand in number. Their office is from time to time to inspect the old laws; and if

they find any that are grown obsolete, contradictory, or useless, to lay the matter before the people for their determination. The Strategoi, or generals of their armies, are ten in number, one out of every tribe. They have each a day of command in their turns. I will not enter into a tiresome detail of the other magistracies amongst the Athenians: it is sufficient to say, that they are very numerous, and share amongst them the different branches of power, from the care of the public revenues to that of regulating the women's apparel, and providing lights and torches at public entertainments.

At the end of the year, the magistrates, who go out of office, are obliged to give in a strict account of their conduct to the people. The Areopagus, the Senate, the Trierarchs, in short, every public officer, who is either chosen by lot in the temple of THESEUS, or voted for by the extension of hands in the assemblies of the people, is obliged to undergo a severe examination of his behaviour, before he is entitled either to any honorary mark of distinction, or reward for his services. And what is much stronger, the law enjoins, that till he has performed this duty, he shall not be permitted to consecrate his patrimony to religious uses, make any offering to the gods, or be adopted into another family, or even dispose of his effects by will. In a word, the accountable magistrate can no longer be said to enjoy the property of his possessions, but is actually suspended from a power of disposing

of them, till it appears that he has acquitted himself like a good citizen in the services committed to his care.

There is nothing deserves more attention in the Athenian constitution, than the nature of their courts of justice, and the manner of their judiciary process. Besides what I formerly mentioned of the Areopagus, I shall here add some further particulars relating to it, and shall conclude with a brief account of their other tribunals. The judges of the Areopagus have three stated meetings every month; when they are met, they divide themselves into different committees, to each of which a certain number of causes are assigned by lot. They use this method of proceeding, that every one of the judges, being ignorant what particular cause will be referred to his determination, may lie under no bias from interest or corruption. Before the trial begins, the plaintiff and defendant by solemn oaths call the gods to witness the sincerity of their proceedings. The former is placed upon a silver stool, called the stool of *Injury*; the latter upon another, called the stool of *Innocence*. Then the pleadings begin, which the parties sometimes compose themselves, but generally employ some orator to place their arguments in the most advantageous light. They are limited as to the time of speaking, and are tied down to state only the plain matter of fact, and reason from it, without using either rhetorical embellishments to amuse, or moving expressions to raise the compassion of the judges. After the cause has been

fully heard, the judges give their opinions: those, who acquit the defendant, cast their votes into a brazen urn; those, who condemn him, cast theirs into one of wood. When the suffrages are equal, the side which is favorable to the prisoner is always taken. If the case is not capital, he names himself the punishment which he thinks he has deserved, and the judges determine it from his opinion. The sentences of this court have always been held in the highest veneration, for their exact conformity to the laws; and its members are in such repute for wisdom and integrity, that foreign states have submitted their differences to their arbitration; particularly the Messenians made that offer to the Spartans, when those two states were at variance. The Athenians themselves say, that let any one of an irregular dissolute course of life be admitted into this court, he immediately lays aside his former vicious inclinations, and is adopted as it were into the virtues, as well as the number, of that venerable tribunal. Besides the Areopagus, the Athenians have four other courts, which take cognizance of capital offences, called the Palladian, the Delphinian, the Prytanean, and the Phreatian. The first of these was rendered by DRACO superior to the Areopagus, but SOLON afterwards lessened its power. The number of judges is fifty-one. The Delphinian tribunal sit in the temple of the Delphic Apollo, and try those murders wherein the fact is owned, but the defence alledges that the laws gave the accused a power of committing

it, as in the case of adultery. The Prytaneum is of a very odd constitution; and thou wilt imagine I am not in earnest, when I tell thee of what nature the causes are which come before them. If a piece of wood or stone, a sword, in short any thing inanimate, kills a man either by accident or the direction of an unknown hand, it is tried before this court; and upon conviction ordered to be cast out of the territories of Athens. The Phreatian court is so called from an ancient hero, and determines the causes of strangers who fly out of their own country for murder, and are apprehended within the limits of the Athenian state.

These are the courts of judicature for criminal causes. Those for civil are in number five: but I shall not trouble thee with an account of any but the Heliaea; so called from its being an open place, and exposed to the sun. The judges of this court are appointed by lot out of the body of the people, and their number varies according to the exigency of affairs, being sometimes reduced to fifty; and at others increased to an hundred. The oath they take is very solemn; they swear by JUPITER, NEPTUNE, and CERES, to give sentence according to the laws and the decrees of the people and senate of Athens, to maintain the present constitution, to take no bribes, to hear both sides impartially, and to suffer no man to be elected into any office who has not given in his accounts. The manner of their judicial proceeding is as follows: after the cause has been registered in the court by the proper

officer, and a day appointed for an hearing, the indictment of the plaintiff is read by a public crier; then the defendant may endeavour to wave entering upon the merits of the case, by putting in one of these three pleas; first, that the time wherein the accusation ought to have been preferred was elapsed; secondly, that the sickness of himself or principal witnesses rendered it impossible for him to make a proper defence; or lastly, that he could retort the indictment preferred against him upon his adversary. If these pleas are either not offered or not allowed, the cause proceeds in the usual course. That the time of the court may not be unnecessarily taken up, an hour-glass of water limits the orations of each. When the pleadings are over, the judges give sentence, by casting beans into two urns, which are opened, and a magistrate stands with a rod in his hand to number the beans, and decides as they come out. The cause is no sooner determined, than a tablet containing the nature of it, and the names of the parties, which, during the time of its being in suspense, hangs up in a public place, called the heroes statues, is ordered to be taken down. The judges deposit their sceptres, the badges of their office, at the temple of LYCUS, and receive the reward of two or three oboli for their service.

From this general view of the Athenian constitution in its most distinguished branches, I believe thou wilt concur with me in opinion, that were its parts less complex, and the whole modelled into a narrower compass, it would

be not only more perfect, but more likely to be durable. The number of the courts of judicature in particular is a great burden to the state, as they tend to break the course of justice, and render the progress of it expensive and troublesome. Many of the poorer sort procure themselves to be elected into these tribunals for the sake of the oboli, that are paid them when they have discharged their office. Such arbitrators inflame every trifling difference, instead of reconciling it, and add fuel to the litigious and quarrellsome temper of their countrymen. It were to be wished, that the wisdom of their judges was equal to that of their laws; but an account of them I reserve for the subject of another letter. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LVIII.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. *From Susa.*

THY last dispatch, as it concerns us very nearly, adds likewise in the highest degree to the merit of thy services; and the speedy return we make to it from hence will convince thee, that the affair and its consequences are esteemed of singular importance. Thy letter, by the king's direction, was laid before the supreme council of seven, which thou knowest is composed of ARTÆUS, president of the tribunal of justice; ARIMASPES the Archimagus; MEGABYZUS;

TERIBAZUS, treasurer of Persia; ASPATHINES, master of the posts; INTAPHERNES, and myself. The remarkable manner in which thou camest to the knowledge of this treasonable correspondence, and the particulars which thou hast extracted from the letters themselves, left us no room to doubt of thy intelligence; and therefore we laid it as our unanimous opinion before the king, that the traitor should be immediately apprehended. At the hour of shutting the palace-gates, a party of eunuchs belonging to the guard of the women's apartments arrested SACAS, and secured his papers. Upon examining them it appeared, that since the death of PERICLES he had destroyed the papers that passed between them; there remained only a few letters from MAZEUS, but in them was sufficient evidence to convict him. For in one he expressly calls SACAS the *Friend of Athens*; and in another, desires him to transmit to PERICLES the terms on which he would rise in arms against his sovereign. He was examined the next day before the tribunal of justice, but behaved with a sullen reserve, till the severity of torture drew from him a confession of his perfidious practices. He would never be induced to say, that any other person was concerned with him, except one slave, whom he had sent twice with letters to Athens, and poisoned at his return to prevent a discovery. His usual manner of conveying his dispatches was, to send them enclosed to a merchant of Athens, one PHILO, under a pretence that they were commissions from the ladies of the palace to purchase Grecian

curiosities. After so full a confession, and the written testimony of MAZEUS's letters, he was sentenced to suffer capital punishment, after the laws of Persia, and condemned to the Boat⁷¹. But in the night that preceded the day appointed for his execution, the queen-mother, from whose slave he was first advanced to a low office in the palace gardens, made very pressing instances that his life should be spared, and himself condemned only to a perpetual imprisonment at Cyrtá upon the Red Sea. Several ladies of the palace, particularly ARSINOE, the fair Damascan, united their interests to hers; and our monarch, divided between the respect which he always pays to the least request of his mother, and the prevalence which love has over the most generous natures, on one hand, and the safety of his empire, and the inviolable observance of justice, on the other, has ordered the execution to be respited. However, the ministers continue to

⁷¹ The punishment of the boat was peculiar to the Persians, and of a very strange nature. They took two boats framed exactly to fit and answer each other. The malefactor who suffered was laid down upon his back in one of them, and covered with the other, in which were holes cut big enough for his head and eyes to appear at. Then they offered him food, which they compelled him to eat by pricking his eyes. The drink they gave him was a mixture of honey and water, pouring it not only down his throat, but over his face, which being kept turned towards the sun, and besmeared with this potion, was always covered with vast numbers of flies and other insects. In this teasing and painful condition the criminal generally languished several days before he expired, and afforded a most noisome spectacle to the by-standers. Note by the translator.

press earnestly, that the laws may take their course; and it is urged, that the punishment of SACAS may be a real clemency to others, who otherwise may be incited to renew the like practices, from observing, in the present case, that they are passed over with impunity. One traitor is however secured; for a courier is just arrived with the head of MAZEUS, the late governor of Phrygia; and orders are dispatched to put to death ARGESTES, which he already deserved for his mal-administration of Lydia. I will not conceal from thee, that these executions have occasioned no small faction and intrigue in the court. The friends of SACAS, and the relations of MAZEUS and ARGESTES, some of whom are of the most considerable families in the empire, put every method in practice, to investigate from what quarter these treasons were discovered. But thou mayest rest assured, CLEANDER, that thy letters are shown to none but those of the secret council; and no care shall be omitted, that may contribute towards thy safety, which, as long as I have any influence, shall be equally secure with my own.

PYRACMON the Spartan tells me, that an agent from Lacedæmon will shortly arrive here, with fuller powers and less limited instructions. If we ever proceed so far with him as to draw up a plan for a league between the Great King and the Lacedæmonians, we shall insist that no peace be made with Athens, till they agree to abolish that article in CIMON's peace, which restrains our navigation. Otherwise the assistance

we shall afford them will be real and effectual to their advantage; and the obligations they lay themselves under with regard to us merely nominal.

I have orders from the king to acquaint thee, that whenever the scene of business at Athens requires a less particular attendance, thou mayest take an opportunity of surveying the most remarkable parts of Greece, and send us accounts, as well of the general face of the country, as of the customs and policies of its different states. The time and manner of performing this journey are left to thy judgment; but in order to defray any expenses it may occasion, and to reward thee for thy late signal service, TERIBAZUS, the treasurer, is directed to transmit to thee 2000 Darics by the hands of thy brother the merchant.

P.

LETTER LIX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

IN a former letter ⁷² I told thee of an extraordinary philosopher, who hath appeared within these few years in the town of Athens. And as thy attention must of course be raised to hear that so much learning exists among the Greeks, it is my design in the present, to give thee an account of some, who have been

⁷² Letter iii.

esteemed in this part of the world for the superiority of their wisdom, and the remarkable sanctity of their manners. To say nothing of the Ionic and Italic schools, which in their turns have produced persons of great eminence and abilities, I shall entirely confine myself to speak of the seven sage contemporaries of Greece.

THALES of Miletus, who is generally counted in the number, was founder of the Ionic sect: the rest are BIAS and CLEOBULUS of Caria, CHILON and MYSON of Laconia, SOLON of Athens, and PITTACUS of Mitylene. They were so highly respected by their countrymen, as to be distinguished by the honorable title which I have just now mentioned. Nor indeed is it to be wondered at, if such singular regard was paid to them, since however deficient their doctrines may seem in more enlightened times, yet methinks a natural reverence is due to those who first opened the avenues to philosophy, and were the earliest improvers of human reason. The particular accident which is said to have been the occasion that this title was bestowed on them, is thus related by the Grecian annalists. Some Milesian fishers having taken a silver tripod in one of their nets, were not able to agree among themselves to whom the property of it should belong, and therefore referred the matter in dispute to the oracle at Delphi. The oracle pronounced it should be given to the wisest man. Accordingly it was sent to THALES, who modestly declined accepting it; and so it passed from

one to another of these philosophers, till it was at last dedicated by SOLON to the god APOLLO. When it was brought to MYSON, the persons charged with it were received by him in the habit of a menial slave working on his own grounds. Happy times of primitive simplicity, when a wife man was known by no other token than his virtue!

I proceed to THALES. He was born in the first year of the thirty-fifth olympiad, and was the most celebrated geometrician, naturalist, and astronomer of the age he lived in. But I shall not present him to thee, SMERDIS, in any one of these regards; and chuse rather to consider him in the capacity of a moral teacher. For as thou, in the character of a religious instructor, art more versed in precepts for the conduct of life, than the idle researches of science; so thou art better pleased with the professors of the former than the latter. THALES, having received several questions from AMASIS the king of Ægypt, sent him the following answer to each of them: "Wouldst thou be informed, what is oldest? It is God, because he is a being from eternity. Wouldst thou know, what is greatest? It is space, because the world contains all things, but that contains the world. Wouldst thou be satisfied, what is fairest? It is the earth, because it is exquisitely contrived and disposed. Wouldst thou be told, what is wisest? It is time, because it discovers the most secret transactions. Wouldst thou be acquainted, what is common to all men? It is hope,

“ for when every possession is gone, that abides
 “ with us. Dost thou ask, what is best? It is
 “ virtue, for it sweetens the enjoyments of
 “ life. Dost thou ask, what is worst? It is
 “ vice, for it corrupts every good. Dost thou
 “ inquire, what is strongest? It is necessity,
 “ because that alone is invincible. Dost thou
 “ inquire, what is most agreeable? It is to
 “ obey the dictates of nature, and pursue the
 “ ends she has marked out.” As he had spent
 the best part of his paternal fortune in literary
 pursuits, his friends reprimanded him one day
 severely for his neglect of it; but he told them,
 that a wise man was always rich, while a rich
 man had seldom the happiness to be wise. And
 upon their asking him, what advantage he had
 reaped from his acquirements in knowledge?
 he answered, he would soon give them a re-
 markable instance of it. In short, having fore-
 seen by some physical observations, that it
 would be a fruitful year, he bargained with
 the inhabitants of Miletus for the produce of
 their olive-trees in the ensuing season. From
 these he extracted a large quantity of oil, the
 profits of which proved a considerable revenue
 to him. When his acquaintance came to con-
 gratulate him on this success, he generously
 distributed his gains to the necessitous; adding,
 that it was the duty of a philosopher to esteem
 money at a low rate. They tell of him, that
 in a conference which he held with a philo-
 sopher of Priene, relating to his extraordinary
 method of calculating the proportion that the
 sun’s body bears to the orbit he describes in
 his

his annual course, the Prienæan admiring the acuteness of THALES, and the beauty of the invention, entreated him to command any reward which it lay in his power to bestow on him; but THALES made him this answer: "I require no other reward from you, than that you should not arrogate to yourself the credit of the invention; but if ever you impart it to others, inform them of the true author. The wisest men are by no means contemners of glory; much less should I, who am very far from the possession of wisdom, be pleased with any man, who would unjustly usurp to himself the honor of those discoveries, which might otherwise redound to my own reputation." A question was one day put to him, whether it were possible for a man to conceal his actions from the gods? "Impossible," said he, "because they are even acquainted with our thoughts." He used to thank Providence for three things; that he was born a reasonable being, and not a brute; a man, and not a woman; a Greek and not a Barbarian. His love of liberty and independence was such, that during his residence in the palace of AMASIS, he made himself obnoxious to the ministers, by the freedom and boldness of his conversation. In particular, he expressed his abhorrence of tyranny so strongly, that it gave offence to the king, who could never be easy till he had sent him away with some notable marks of his displeasure. The reflection which chiefly enraged them was this: "That of all wild beasts a tyrant is the

“ worst, and of all tame beasts a flatterer.” Thus was THALES an excellent philosopher, but a bad courtier! This however happened fortunately for Greece, since by that means he was forced back into his native country, which he enriched with those invaluable treasures of learning that he brought from Ægypt.

BIAS was descended of a noble family in Priene. He had a natural talent for eloquence, which he so improved by practice, that his name as an orator grew famous over all Greece. To tell a pleader, that he had performed at the bar of a court of justice like BIAS of Priene, was for many years thought the highest compliment that could have decently been paid to any one. The most remarkable story, that is told of him, I find to be this: When ARDYS, who succeeded GYGES on the throne of Lydia, took the city of Priene by storm, and was just preparing to give it up to the plunder of his soldiers, the inhabitants were diligently employed in removing their effects. In the midst of this general consternation, BIAS alone appeared not concerned for the event; and being admonished by some of his acquaintance to follow their example, he immediately answered them, “ You are mistaken, if you think I am unmindful of my affairs; for all that is mine I carry with me.” There is one precept of his, which bears hard upon his character, viz. “ That we should ever behave towards an enemy, as if he might become our friend; and towards a friend, as if he might become our enemy.” The first part of it, which regards our conduct to an enemy, is a wise

and rational reflection; but the last part, that regards our conduct to a friend, seems destructive of social happiness, and the pleasure resulting from the unreserved overflowings of affection. The different circumstances and casualties of my life, venerable SMERDIS, (and surely various are the trials I have undergone,) never gave me occasion, I confess to thee, to believe it a necessary maxim. This conclusion, however, thou wilt naturally draw from it; that the philosopher who imparted this severe advice to the world, must have intrusted the secrets of his heart to a man, who proved afterwards perfidious; and the rather, because one would imagine that nothing could have extorted it from him, but his own fatal experience of the corruption and fickleness of human nature. How much better is the generous principle of his countryman CLEOBULUS, that "Enemies are to be reclaimed by a gentle forbearance, and friends to be preserved by a cordial benevolence!" The life of this philosopher was not distinguished by any interesting events. It is known of him in general, that he lived happily in the office of principal magistrate in his city, and was blessed by Providence with an extraordinary daughter. She was a celebrated composer of enigmas, many of which she sent into Ægypt to be solved by the sagacity of the learned. Though her father was very attentive to the management of his passions, yet she was of great service to him in moderating those unguarded starts of anger, which were apt to break from him; a

circumstance the more agreeable to CLEOBULUS, as it was accompanied with all the amiable simplicity of real tenderness and duty!

CHILON possessed the dignity of an Ephorus in Lacedæmon. Being asked by ÆSOP the fabulist, what he thought most difficult, he replied, "to keep a secret, and to bear an injury." He wrote a letter to PERIANDER of Corinth, in which he told him, that "it was impossible for a tyrant to be safe; and he might esteem himself singularly fortunate, if he died peaceably in his bed." In his old age he declared among his intimates, that he was not conscious he had ever done any thing inconsistent with his duty, except that in a contest between one whom he loved, and another whom he had no regard for, he was unwilling to determine either against his friend or the law, and so persuaded him to appeal to a different tribunal, where he might hope to be acquitted. How few are there who, like CHILON, at the close of a long life, can accuse their judgment but once of being warped by partiality!

MYSON was an inhabitant of the town of Chæna. Notwithstanding his father was governor of the place, he seems to have neglected those honors to which his birth and rank did naturally call him, and to have retired from the noise of public business to his little farm, confining himself to the culture of his lands, and the improvement of his own mind.

I come now to SOLON. Were I to give thee a particular account of his institutions,

this letter would swell into a volume; nor will I endeavour to describe to thee the rapturous veneration which the Athenians pay to his memory, since an attempt of that sort could only present thee with a faint idea of it. Besides, thou mayest perceive it is no part of my design to consider him as a wise law-giver or a superior politician, but as he stands on an equality with the rest of these speculative philosophers. Having met with innumerable crosses, which usually disturb a good man in republican governments, SOLON was rather forced by the necessity of the times, than tempted by his curiosity, to travel into Ægypt. However, while he staid there, he made himself well acquainted with the knowledge of the country. On his return to Athens, he found PISISTRATUS invested with the supreme authority; and though he was his nearest relation, yet he vigorously opposed each of his arbitrary measures. He told his countrymen, that "in asserting their common liberties, he thought himself wiser than some among them, and braver than others; wiser than those who suspected not the intentions of PISISTRATUS, and braver than those who suspected them, but timorously concealed their sentiments." He used to say, "that laws are like cobwebs; they entangle the weak and men of low condition, but the rich and the powerful break through them." The story of his conference with CROESUS on the subject of happiness, is well known, from the large account of it that hath been lately published in the Clio of HERODOTUS.

I imagine a copy of that excellent history must have penetrated into Bactria ; and therefore I will not trouble thee with a tedious repetition of what is there recited , nor spoil its beauty by contracting it. SOLON, in order to prevent the abuses , which might arise from the extensive power of the people , created a council of four hundred to be chosen out of the tribes , who were to examine every proposition , before it was offered to the general assembly for their determination. On this head ANACHARSIS, the Scythian sage , made a lively remark to him : “ Methinks, (said he ,) it is a strange disposition of your affairs , that you should suffer “ wise men to debate , and leave it to fools “ to decide.”

PITTACUS was a man of remarkable steadiness in his conduct. He killed the tyrant who oppressed his country , and for that gallant action the people of Mitylene submitted themselves of their own accord to his authority. He governed them for ten years with surprising lenity ; and when they begun to grow weary of him , he abdicated the regal office. He would frequently exclaim , “ How difficult is it for a great man “ to be honest ? ” Without doubt , he had experienced , that the life of a prince was one miserable round of dissimulation ; and that it was sometimes more necessary to satisfy the exigencies of state-policy , than the dictates of conscience. He exhorted his friends to secure a retreat within their own bosoms , and to fly from the troublesome crowd of flatterers , which surrounded them , to that engaging

solitude. He ordered a wheel to be placed in the temple at Mitylene, as an emblem of the uncertain course of fortune and vicissitude of things.

I have now laid before thee, venerable SMERDIS, such, material particulars, as I have been able to collect, relating to the lives and characters of the wise men. Nor can it have escaped thy penetration, that in the maxims, which I have cited from them in the course of my letter, they have touched upon those lessons of wisdom, which are the most improving, and conveyed them to the understanding of others with the clearest brevity. At the same time it must be owned, that the sentences I speak of, though they are certainly very precious remains of their opinions, are yet far from composing any regular and consistent scheme of philosophy. Hence is it, that the doctrines of the Grecian sages swarm with various contradictions, while some have rejected with disdain, what others supported with obstinacy. How little then can any or all of them be compared with the inspired prophet of the East! If these had the happiness to be blessed with any faint dawnings of the light of reason; ZOROASTER enjoyed it in its full force and lustre. If these laid down any rational principles of conduct in human life; ZOROASTER understood the relations of duty, and revealed a noble system of morality. If these were eminent among their citizens for philosophical austerities; ZOROASTER may be considered as a perfect pattern of virtue. If these investigated any truths in

the knowledge of nature; ZOROASTER was acquainted with all her secret wonders and mightiest operations. If these, when they worshipped that immortal power, who is the provident artist, and wise governor of the universe, confined themselves to the petty limits of a temple made with hands, and offered sacrifices on altars of their own erecting; ZOROASTER taught, that the temple of OROMASDES was infinite space, that his altar was the earth, the air, and the heavens. If these were of service to one corner of mankind, to their native cities, and the narrow districts of their own communities; the religion of ZOROASTER was not fixed to one place or society of men; it has made its way through innumerable nations of the world. To conclude, the philosophers, like the gods of Greece, were partial in their knowledge, selfish in their pursuits, unsettled in their conduct, contentious in their natures, mean in their affections: ZOROASTER, like his own deity, the great OROMASDES, was boundless in knowledge, extensive in benevolence, uniform in his conduct, undisturbed in his nature, refined in his affections. In a word, the former were only fitted to perplex the reason, and divide the hearts of their countrymen; while the latter was born to clear and improve the one, to enlarge and unite the other. Adieu.

From Athens.

C.

LETTER LX.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS. *From Athens.*

HAD I not received thy commands to lay before thee some account of the military discipline of the Greeks, I should never have ventured to address my remarks on that subject to so consummate a captain, who, by long experience in the duties of a soldier, and the warlike arts of different nations, must anticipate every thing that can be offered, on a science, which the ablest general now living might be proud to learn under thy ensigns. But my desire to gain an insight into every particular in the Athenian policy and customs, from whence the Persian ministry could expect information, has induced me to extend my inquiries to a part of knowledge, which would otherwise have lain out of my sphere. I shall therefore endeavour to comply with thy orders, by sending thee such observations as I have either had an opportunity of making myself, or collected from the discourse of the best officers amongst the Athenians, whose tactics throughout this letter I have kept principally in view.

The military force of this republic, and indeed of all the other Grecian states, is composed of three sorts of troops, citizens, allies, and mercenaries. The former, thou mayest imagine, are held in the highest degree of

esteem, and most relied upon; the latter being exposed without concern, and never trusted without necessary cautions; and since their attachment to the cause, for which they fight, is owing to motives of constraint or profit, their fidelity is sometimes suspected.

The young Athenians are early trained up to arms; at the age of eighteen they learn the military exercises under the inspection of able masters, and inure their bodies to suppleness and fatigue, by frequenting the stadia and wrestling schools. At twenty their names are entered in the public register, after taking a solemn oath in the temple of AGRAULES, by which they oblige themselves "to fight till the last gasp" for the interest of religion and the state, in "conjundion with their fellow-citizens, or" even alone, if occasion requires; to increase "the prosperity of their country; to obey the" laws enacted by consent of the people; and "to oppose with all their might those who" shall attempt to alter the constitution." When this ceremony is performed, the young men are looked upon as members of the commonwealth, enjoy all the privileges, and are liable to all the duties of citizens; amongst which that of appearing in arms, whenever the voice of the people requires their service in the field, is none of the least: but in order to inure them to the discipline and fatigues of war, they take their turns by detachments to mount guard in the citadel, Piræus, and other forts of Attica, for two years before they are sent upon any expedition abroad. The Grecian infantry, in

which the strength, of their armies consists, is made up of Hoplitai, Psiloi, and Peltastai. The first are heavy-armed soldiers, who engage with long spears, broad shields, and cutting swords. The second are light-armed men, who fight with arrows, darts, and slings, and are placed either in the van to begin an engagement, or on the flanks of the wings, to gall the enemies cavalry, and prevent their breaking in. The Peltastai are a sort of troops between the two former, so called from the narrow targets which they wear. These again are divided into bodies of thousands, hundreds, and fifties each, commanded by their proper officers, the Chiliarchs, Hekatontarchs, &c. To each company of one hundred and twenty men four subalterns are assigned; the lieutenant, whose post is in the rear, the ensign, the trumpeter, the crier, who gives the word of command, and the sutler, who supplies the men with necessaries, and waits upon them. The Athenian officers all assure me, that amongst the many advantages their troops have over those of the East, they reckon these sub-divisions to be one of the principal. By this means the men perform their exercises with more exactness and uniformity, move with greater quickness, attack with greater force, and have a larger number of officers to watch over their conduct in their quarters, as well as encourage and direct them in a day of battle. Over the foot are placed ten camp-masters, with the title of Taxiarchoi, chose by each of the

tribes ⁷³; they command, under the general, [who is always one of the Strategoi elected annually by the people,] the infantry of their respective tribes, give orders for the marches, review the men, punish them for their misdemeanours, and regulate the distribution of victuals to every soldier. The cavalry are divided into squadrons under their proper officers, two of whom are called Hipparchoi, and have the same jurisdiction over them as the Taxiarchoi have over the foot: but the Grecian cavalry is not very numerous; and in this respect I should think the Persian armies were far their superiors, when they have generals at their head, who know how to make use of so material an advantage. The Hippeis ⁷⁴ or horsemen, at Athens compose the second order of citizens, and are required to have a certain annual revenue, and to maintain a horse at their own charge; but they do not amount to twelve hundred at the most. The Lacedæmonians are likewise but indifferently supplied with cavalry; the best of theirs comes from Sciros, a town not far distant from Sparta.

⁷³ Their names are the Aegean, the Erechian, the Cecropian, the Pandionian, the Acamantian, Antiochian, Leontian, Oenian, Hippothoonian, and Ajacian. The reader may see in POTTER's Antiquities the several divisions of these tribes into Demoi or boroughs. Note by the translator.

⁷⁴ The Athenians were divided into three orders: the first were worth 500 medimus of liquid and dry commodities; the second 300; the third 200: the rest were allowed to vote, but not to bear offices in the state. This was an institution of SOLOON. Note by the translator.

Indeed a very natural reason is to be assigned for their deficiency in this branch of their armies; for as Attica and Peloponnesus are mountains and rough countries, there is no opportunity or encouragement to train up a breed of horses for the service; and those they have can be of little use in military operations from the situation of the ground. The cavalry of the Thessalians, who possess large and extended plains, is most esteemed, and therefore hired by the rest of the Grecians to supply that defect amongst themselves. The custom of paying soldiers was introduced here by PERICLES: before his administration every citizen served at his own expense; now a foot-soldier receives three oboli a day, and a horseman a drachm; but upon particular occasions this stipend is increased.

Thou must have observed of the Grecian armies, that they are not formidable so much for their numbers, or even courage, as individuals; as for the excellent discipline, which prevails among them, and that warm love of glory and their country, which animates every man in the army, from the highest officer to the meanest soldier. Their courage, without the former, would only expose them to danger; without the latter, they would want the most powerful motive to distinguish themselves. Their evolutions are contrived with deep penetration, founded on practice and a study of the military art, which is unknown to the rude undisciplined multitudes of the East, who are dragged out of the villages to recruit our

armies, and urged on by blows and scourges to the attack.

When the Grecians would break the adverse battalions, they throw themselves into the form of a wedge, which the enemy, if they understand their business, receive in a *koilembolon*, or pair of sheers, which intercepts and breaks the force of the rhombus. When they would receive or give a regular onset, they form in a body of sixteen in flank, and five hundred in front, presenting on all sides a firm impenetrable phalanx. When they would enter defiles or straits possessed by an enemy, they extend their files in the shape of a worm, from whence the figure receives its name: in short, no one incident can happen in a day of battle, for which they have not invented a proper motion; unlike the armies of Persia, potent lord, thou well knowest, who rush on tumultuously with hideous cries, and place their whole dependence upon the fury of the first attack. If that fails them, their courage abates, their ranks grow disordered, the officers are unable to give orders in the confusion that ensues; and if the enemy give one brisk push, they betake themselves to a shameful flight.

The science of attacking and defending towns is much improved in this country since the invasion of XERXES, when the Spartans, after the defeat of MARDONIUS, could not force a body of Persians, who had taken refuge in some wooden fortifications, till the Athenians marched to their assistance. The long duration

of the siege of Plataea has contributed towards a variety of new works and machines, that are daily brought into practice; their usual method was to draw up their army in the form of a tortoise, and give a general storm, or else batter the walls with the ram, and then send a party to enter by the breach. I have hitherto confined myself to the discipline of the land-armies; but as the chief pride and security of Athens consists in the number and goodness of her ships, and the experience and skill of her seamen, thou mayest expect from me some remarks on that part of her military force. In a former letter to GOBRIAS ⁷⁵ I mentioned the classes of twelve hundred rich citizens chosen out of each tribe, upon whom the expenses of all the naval preparations are laid. These classes are divided into companies of sixteen each, who unite to fit out a trireme; but there seems to be something unjust in the law upon which this practice is founded. Every citizen, from the age of twenty-five to forty, is ranked in one of these companies; and whether he has a revenue of two hundred talents, or of two, is obliged to contribute equally in equipping a single ship. Now it seems highly unreasonable, that the possessors of plentiful estates should contribute no more than others towards the public expense; and that the citizens of smaller fortunes should be burdened with as large an assessment as the more opulent: and yet the law, as it stands at present, is

⁷⁵ Letter xxxiii.

liable to these objections, and I think it would be very meritorious in any of their orators to propose a new regulation ⁷⁶. The Athenians man their galleys, according to their respective rates, with a due proportion of soldiers and sailors. The former are generally heavy-armed, for they endeavour to come to boarding as soon as possible, and by engaging hand to hand, bring it as near as is practicable to a land-fight. The sailors are made up of mariners, who manage the sails and tackling, and rowers; both composed of citizens, contrary to the practice in other countries, where the latter are always slaves. Amongst the Athenians they divide them into three orders; those in the uppermost benches are called *Thranitai*, those in the middle *Zeugitai*, those in the lower *Thalamitai*. The first have the largest pay; since by the distance of the water, and length of their oars, they undergo more fatigue and danger than the others. The officers on board a fleet, besides the admiral and his lieutenants, are the *Trierarchs* or captains of ships, who have under them the master or pilot, the *Keleustes* or boatswain, who directs and places the rowers, and the *Logistes* or purser, besides other subalterns.

Having thus submitted to thy censure an imperfect essay on the Grecian tactics, permit me, illustrious minister, to impart my thoughts

⁷⁶ This was afterwards done by DEMOSTHENES. See the oration *περὶ Στεφανῆ*. wherein both the laws are inserted.

with

with boldness on a scheme which has often occurred to me. Since our royal master has seen peace in his days, he has done, a great deal towards healing the losses, and restoring the honor of the empire. But might he not put the finishing stroke to so glorious a work, by allowing pensions out of his treasury to any able officers and engineers, who would travel over Greece, and study the art of war, which begins to arrive at a degree of perfection and refinement unknown to former ages? Some might in disguise take plans of the principal cities, inquire into the strength of each state, survey the situation of the country, and find out the proper places for encampments, surprise, or disembarkation. Others should enlist in the troops which now contest the dominion of Greece, endeavour to gain the esteem of the generals, and be present at and take a journal of every action. When they return home, the king might reward them proportionably to the diligence of their inquiries, and the importance of their remarks. They should then be dispersed over the provinces, to discipline the troops, and fortify those cities and passes which are esteemed the keys of the empire. I know it is sufficient to mention this project to thee, potent Satrap; nor need I enlarge upon the increase of real strength to Persia, of reputation to her arms, of glory to our present monarch, and of lustre to the ministry of MEGABYZUS, which would be the infallible consequences of it. Farewel.

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LETTER LXI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THE more I consider human nature, the more I find it unable to bear the agitations of love, grief, or indignation in silence, or under the cover of tranquillity and cheerfulness. In such circumstances the affections will force their way; we must vent our groans to the rocks, and pour out our complaints to the senseless and inanimate part of the creation, if we are afraid to intrust them with the rational and those of our own species. Men of narrow minds, who have wanted generosity enough to gain a friend, or of fickle minds, who have wanted sedateness enough to fix one, must frequently have recourse to soliloquies in retirement, when tossed to and fro by the hurricane of passion. But for my own part, I thank the gracious OROMASDES, that he has given me a warmth of temper, as well as strength of understanding, sufficient to make me zealous in cultivating a strict correspondence with the wise and faithful CLEANDER, in whose bosom I may deposit every undisguised thought and disquieting apprehension. Let me open myself to thee without reserve on the state of the Bactrian schools, and the indolence of our order. It will not surprise thee that I blame their faults; for thou art too well acquainted with my integrity, to imagine me capable of approving those corruptions, which the

fanguine would pronounce it my duty to palliate, and the cautious would think it my interest to maintain.

Our mighty prophet ZOROASTER received numberless favors from the great DARIUS, in whose memorable reign he appeared. The erudition and sanctity of the order, which he reformed, occasioned the bountiful encouragements and large revenues, which were bestowed on us by the monarchs who succeeded him. They thought our attention to rectify the religious notions, and improve the reasons of our followers, qualified us to instruct the youth of the empire in philosophical speculations: they thought the recluseness of our condition and the purity of our lives enabled us to curb their appetites, and refine their practice. In our hands therefore the heirs of noble families and the hopes of the kingdom were placed.

By this means they conceived, that, notwithstanding the alterations in our government and manners, the loss of the ancient schools would be repaired, simplicity preserved in those who are surrounded with superfluities, and continence amidst every incitement to transgress. I need not enlarge on these mistakes, which are obvious, and, however absurd in themselves, are too serious in their consequences to be ridiculed.

Alas! the ignorance of the world, in which we are generally brought up, and which has preposterously raised our reputation, both as observers and teachers of morality, introduces

more faults amongst us than it saves us from; and instead of subduing or extinguishing the passions, it only cuts out another channel for them. Though our desire of reputation be checked, and our vanity constrained to act in a narrow sphere, we give a loose to pride, and look down on the useful part of society with an insolent scorn. Though we have few opportunities of showing our obstinacy in action, yet we are strangely tenacious of opinions; and though we are clear of those vices which arise from promiscuous conversation, we fall into the low habits that attend a want of it. — Believe me, my Ephesian friend, there is no error which carries less the appearance of truth, at the same time that there is none more destructive of magnanimity, than this, that “not to have met with temptation, is to have acquired virtue.” But if it was the intention of Providence, that virtue should be the effect of good sense and experience united, it is then incumbent upon us, who are to educate a nation, to have known the world, and struggled with its insinuating allurements. What though we be guilty of mistakes at first setting out, neither ourselves nor our neighbours should despair of us; we must pursue our journey, take care to be informed better of the right track; and after having followed it, our advice to the young adventurers in life will be received with more reverence, when it proceeds from a sobriety not natural and phlegmatic, but painfully and dangerously acquired. Such men would be far advanced in the way to

perfection; for though to learn wisdom from the sufferings of others be the highest point of it, yet it requires no small share of understanding to take warning, and to give it, in consequence of our own. Such men might be said in truth to have the government of their passions, might be esteemed masters in the art of education; and having tried what the world is, would be fit instructors for those who are to live in it. It were to be wished therefore, that while some of us are employed in contemplating and explaining the divine volume of ZERDUSHT, others should be employed in the public service, in travelling abroad, and enriching themselves with the fruits of their inquiries into men and things; and that all of us, at a certain age, in recompence for the support we had received from the colleges of Balch, should be recalled, and obliged to spend the rest of our days in forming the youth of Persia. We might then hope to see the institution of this place much amended. Instead of teaching chicanery, evasion, and positiveness in our schools, the sound principles of policy and justice would be set forth: instead of a scrupulous attachment to forms enforced by the terror of an unmanly discipline, we should behold a general regard to good breeding, candor, and philosophy, arising from an inward regulation of temper and a well-turned mind. No man would enjoy the pension designed for the diligent, who was not somehow or other interested in the great work; and it might be found possible, however it

may seem otherwise at present, for the oldest and most venerable of our order to converse with their disciples, and not betray themselves into the extreme of an unmeaning dignity, or a low familiarity. Thus conducted and improved in the opening of life, the youth would no longer laugh at our sage counsels with the giddiness of children, nor disdain to obey our laws with the stubbornness of men; and the Magi themselves would think they ill deserved the emoluments they receive, or ill answered the end of their founder, if they were regular in no good thing but their oraisons to the rising or declining MITHRAS.

LETTER LXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Athens.*

THE fourth campaign of this war is opened with symptoms not very favorable to the Athenians. Early in the spring they received the unexpected news that SITALCES had sworn to a separate peace with Macedon, his troops had been repulsed at the attack of Europus, worsted in some skirmishes with PERDICCAS' cavalry, and began to want provisions, and suffer from the inclemency of the weather. But what gave him most uneasiness was the delay of the Athenian succours, (for the republic was afraid of sending their ships so far

from home,) and the intelligence he had, that the people of Thessaly, alarmed at his ambitious views, were taking arms in the South, and some of his neighbours in Thrace, from the same motive, forming leagues against him in the North. These at least are the reasons, and not unplaufible ones, by which he palliated his conduct to the Athenian ambassadors; but the truth of the matter is, as I privately learn, that the artful PERDICCAS had gained over SEUTHES, a near relation, and principal counsellor to SITALCES, with the promise of marrying him to STRATONICA his sister, and giving her a vast portion, if he could bring about an accommodation. And such (it seems) is the influence of this minister, that in eight days time he prevailed with his master to abandon the poor AMYNTAS, as well as his own claims, and return home. It is added, that the king of Macedon, resolved not to disappoint his benefactor, is making preparations at Pella for the nuptials of STRATONICA and SEUTHES.

Three expresses have arrived here within these few days from the magistrates of Tenedos and the inhabitants of Methymna, which brought advice, that all the cities of Lesbos had entered into a confederacy to shake off their dependance upon Athens; that their magazines were furnished with corn, and their garrisons with archers from the Pontus Euxinus; and that the preparations for an open revolt were so far advanced, that unless the Athenians used the utmost vigor and dispatch in

quelling these commotions, the island would be lost. Private intelligence is likewise come from some friends in Mitylene, the capital of Lesbos, that the leading men amongst the revolters have determined to send deputies to Lacedæmon, to desire that they may be admitted into the Peloponnesian league. This news has sensibly touched the Athenians; the most penetrating amongst them apprehend very bad consequences from these Lesbian troubles. They look upon this revolt as giving the signal to the other tributary islands, to withdraw their supplies of ships and money, and either stand absolutely neuter in the present dissensions of Greece, or throw themselves under the protection of Lacedæmon or the Great King. They very well know, that their allies obey them more through fear than affection; that the absolute authority; which for many years they have exercised over them, has produced discontents, which want nothing but a fit occasion to break out into an open flame. They reason further, what can Athens do, when she is left alone to stand her ground against so many potent enemies, who pretend to have no other cause for taking up arms, but to keep the balance even, and to preserve themselves from the insults and assuming spirit of the Athenians? Her treasures must soon be exhausted, when the chief sources of them (arising from the contributions of the allies) are either lost to her, or turned against her. The inhabitants of a single city can never suffice to man annual fleets, or recruit large armies,

particularly when that city has been considerably weakened by a cruel plague; much less will they be able to bear up against the losses and misfortunes, which are the ordinary attendants of war. What are we to expect from the other islands, when one, that has been the most favored and distinguished, is the first to rise in arms against us? These are the reflections I meet with in the porticos, where the Athenians meet to talk over the business of the day, and to inquire of each other what news is stirring. To add to their distractions, the Peloponnesian army is encamped in the territories of Attica, and skirmishes often happen between their detachments and the garrison of the city. However, to preserve that resolution and address, which they have hitherto shown, they work day and night at the Piræus to equip a fleet of forty galleys, the command of which is given to CLIPPIDES, who has already received secret instructions from the senate, the contents of which, as I am informed, are, that “he must sail with the
“squadron under his command to the port of
“Mitylene, and endeavour to surprise the inhabitants at a feast, which they celebrate
“every year to APOLLO, without the walls of
“the city. If he finds that solemnity past, or
“the Mitylenians prepared for his reception,
“he is to demand of them to deliver up their
“ships, and demolish the fortifications which
“they have lately raised. In case of refusal,
“he is ordered to declare war against them,

“and to keep the port blocked up, till further reinforcement arrives from Athens.” The ten gallies, which the Lesbians, by virtue of their treaty with Athens, are obliged to join to their fleet now lying at Phalera, are seized, and the officers and mariners thrown into prison.

I had written thus far, when accidentally hearing a noise in the street, I had the curiosity to inquire the occasion of it, and was told, that a captain of a trireme stationed in the Pireus had stopped a vessel pretended to be bound for Ephesus, secured the packets found on board, and put the men under arrest by order of the Polemarchus. Struck with the thought that I had committed a parcel, addressed to my brother HIPPIAS, in which were enclosed dispatches to thyself and some Persian friends, to the care of the master of this vessel, a thousand doubts and apprehensions crowded at once into my mind. Recollecting that I had no time to lose, I run down to the Pireus, and found the captain preparing to carry his packets to the Prytanes. As I had luckily some acquaintance with him, I took him aside, and told him, that he probably had a packet of mine in his hands, which contained mercantile business of great consequence to my brother, which if exposed to the eyes of the magistrates, with some of whom he had dealings in the way of trade, must be highly detrimental to his traffic here. I therefore desired him to restore me that packet. He remonstrated to me,

that his orders were exprefs to bring all the papers he found in the vefſel. I affured him that upon demand of the magiſtrates it ſhould be produced. My earneſt entreaties, ſupported by the more weighty eloquence of a talent, which I put into his hand, prevailed with him at laſt to reſtore it to me. I went home, and upon the ſpot made up a parcel, containing nothing but letters from me to HIPPIAS on our private concerns, which exactly reſembled the former in ſize and figure. I had ſcarce put in execution this neceſſary artifice, when an officer brought me a ſummons from the Prytanes to appear directly before them. I went with an honeſt confidence, and found thoſe magiſtrates in deep conſultation. DYMAS the trierarch vouched, that the packet I delivered in to them was the ſame he had ſeized. The papers were looked into, ſome few general queſtions put to me, and after an hour's attendance I was diſmiſſed. The Epiſtata, or preſident, declared to me that they were ſatisfied; that I had not been examined upon any particular ſuſpicion, but that nothing might be omitted in ſo diſtempered a time, which any way tended to ſecure the tranquillity of the ſtate. He gravely exhorted me to be diſcreet in my correſpondencies, and prudent in my behaviour. I am ſince informed by a friend among the Prytanes, that the ſhip was ſtopped becauſe they had diſcovered, that inſtead of going for Ephelus, the maſter was bribed to change his courſe, and make for Lesbos. They have found

advices from one AGNON, an host of the Mitylenians, relating to the preparations going forward here. This AGNON is actually imprisoned, and will soon be put to death for his treasonable practices.

Having thus happily escaped so unexpected a danger, I shall set forward in a few days for the Olympic games, which are to be celebrated this year with the usual magnificence. The permission, which thy last dispatch brought me from our royal master, to survey some parts of Greece, has invited me to undertake so agreeable a journey; and the large remittance, which I received lately from TERIBAZUS, enables me to perform it with convenience.

I prostrate my head in the dust, potent Satrap, for the favors heaped upon me. May the great OROMASDES continue to shed his healing influence upon the throne of CYRUS and the whole empire of Persia, averting from both (as he hath lately done by discovering the perfidy of SACAS) the malign efforts of the accursed ARIMANIUS! Farewel.

P.

LETTER LXIII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

I COMPLAINED of a relaxation of discipline amongst the Magi ⁷⁷; and though not without reason, yet it would be injurious to impute it wholly to them: perhaps a general corruption may be too strong for their best efforts to restrain. The children of the great are committed to their care much later than formerly; they bring with them an high opinion of their rank, a confidence in their paternal fortunes, and an eagerness for pleasures, of which they have had an early taste. They associate only one with another, and seek partners in voluptuousness rather than the advantages of wise conversation, which would be attended with restraint; for excellent instruction is still to be had amongst the Magi, by those who want not industry and an ingenuous disposition: witness the young ORSAMES, who owns himself indebted to our schools for those qualities which adorn him, and promise such fruits to his country. But observe, CLEANDER, the prudent steps taken by the Satraps and the wealthy, who have entertained unfavorable opinions of a Persian education; they send their children abroad, and take no further concern about their conduct than that it may not be seen by them. The young Persian is set out with a

splendid retinue; has his recommendations from Susa, and wherever he goes is received as a Satrap; he is honored in our provinces, and gazed at in foreign states; his mind is elevated above his rank, be it what it will, and his improvements seldom qualify him for any. He probably impairs his fortunes, and upon his return, has a mind much raised above the thoughts of œconomy; or if he submits to it, it is in a wrong place. The expenses of equipage and voluptuousness are become necessary and indispensable: he therefore grows parsimonious to those who have just claims upon him; he oppresses his dependants, and sparingly rewards the countryman, the guardian of his wealth. Nor is this to be wondered at; the young traveller sets out with a mind not yet confirmed in any principles, and at an age strongly biassed to pleasure. He therefore most naturally falls in with the corruptions of every country, both in principles and practice; for as he is disposed to gratify his affections, he readily admits such sentiments as favor them. It is generally thought the business of a traveller to select for the benefit of his country what appears to him to make up the most perfect polity; and from his experience of men, to become himself an exemplary, wise, and good citizen. But our young traveller takes a pleasure in reciting the imperfections he has observed in government, manners, and religion; he dwells much on the superstitions of Ægypt, the bigotry of the people, and the craft of the priests; and intimates, that he has much

improved his sagacity in regard to the worship of his own country. He is just such an observer in morals; for if he has made the tour of Greece, he assures you, that the rule of right and wrong, the ground of all justice, so much insisted on by our ancestors, is not so indelibly imprinted by nature as has been imagined; that an ancient and flourishing state has subsisted without the cultivation of it; though probably he takes this upon hearsay, for our youth seldom come nearer to Sparta than a neighbouring isle⁷⁸; much better suited to the delicacy of their lives. What can be the reason of this, but that they think their practice justified by these great authorities? Why else do we hear little more of Athens, than its sports and gaiety? of Sardis, than its gaming? and of Babylon, than its obscene hospitality? I assure thee, CLEANDER, I have known some of our youth, after a toilsome passage across Arabia and the sea into Upper Ægypt, upon hearing the festival rites at Cyprus were coming on, take a light vessel, and with all the expedition of oars and sail swim down the Nile, and content themselves with so transitory a view of the great cities and monuments of that ancient kingdom. When they reached the ports of Cyprus, which extends its arms into the sea, and encloses vast fleets in its bosom, they spent little reflection on its stupendous moles and its conveniences for lading. They heard, that the temple of

⁷⁸ Cythera, the island of VENUS.

the Grecian goddess was open ; that a choir of an hundred youths , and as many beautiful virgins , had already begun the solemn ode ; they perfumed themselves with rich oils , and crowned with garlands , hastened to mix in the idolatrous rites , habited like shepherds of Arcadia ; for all appear in disguise on this occasion , that they may not be under the restraint of shame , which ill becomes the votaries of so impure a deity.

Tender minds , CLEANDER , are ready for all impressions ; therefore it is not proper they should be withdrawn from wise and virtuous patterns , till they have gained an intimate acquaintance with virtue , and are able to combat the temptations of vice and folly. The soul is long in its infancy ; the body comes much earlier to maturity : young men therefore (as the wives of the Magi are confined to the most beautiful objects of sight , and hear nothing but harmony , that no ill impression may deface their offspring , which is to be dedicated to the holy service of the temple) should be accustomed to no ideas that may pollute the soul , the purity of which is an offering most delightful to OROMASDES.

It is at too great a hazard they go in quest of what is worthy their imitation in Ægypt or Greece ; for that much may be found so by a prudent inquirer , I will not deny : wisdom is not confined to one climate , it shoots out in some shape every where ; at Athens it is wise policy , tender regard for the community , and every art that is properly humane ;

humane; at Lacedæmon it is public liberty, maintained by austere discipline, and an ignorance of every enervating pleasure; in Ægypt it is piety to the gods, and a veneration for all things sacred. It once appeared under all these denominations in Persia: alas! that we can now find it only in our histories!

Perhaps after all, CLEANDER, thou wilt say, what need all this precaution in favor of virtue? and why should our youth be prejudiced in her behalf, who is represented so amiable as to strike her beholders with admiration, and force our esteem? It is because virtue, though more amiable, is not so obvious; she useth little art to recommend herself; like a chaste virgin, she must be sought after and sued for: vice, like a prostitute, always presents herself, is officious, importunate, and insnaring. ORSAMES is acquainted with this; he traverses the distant regions of the earth, not to gratify the idle curiosity of sight, or adorn the palace of his Persian ancestors with the arts of Greece, but to complete the furniture of his mind, to fit it for the abode of OHOMASDES, who deigns to dwell with the good: in awe of whose presence the wicked AHRIMAN will fly from us, as the shades of night disperse at the approach of MITHRAS, to distant countries, and the deep caverns of the earth.

LETTER LXIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. *From Athens.*

THIS is the last letter, which I shall write to thee from Athens in some months. I set out to-morrow on an expedition to the Olympic games, and promise myself, that the magnificence and order, with which they are celebrated, the great confluence of Greeks, who repair from all parts to Olympia, the variety of countries and noble cities I shall pass through in my road, and especially the agreeable set of friends who accompany me, will more than answer the ideas of pleasure and improvement which I propose to myself from the journey. Thou wilt, I believe, think that I have made a very happy mixture of acquaintance, when I let thee into the characters of my fellow-travellers. My patron PHILEMON, as well upon account of his age as his merits, should be mentioned first. This worthy Athenian ever since my residing here has treated me with particular regard: to him I am indebted for the friendship I have made with those who are most distinguished in Athens for their virtues and abilities: to him I owe the little knowledge I have acquired of the constitution of the republic, and the manners of a people the most contradictory and various in their dispositions of all others. PHILEMON has passed through the most considerable offices in

the state. He was, when very young, captain of a trireme at the battle of Salamis, and narrowly missed taking the famous Queen ANTEMISIA, who escaped him by a very extraordinary stratagem. He has been since overseer of the fortifications, archon, one of the five hundred, and is now a member of the Areopagus. In all these employments an unblemished integrity, and an exact discharge of his duty, have recommended him to his countrymen as one of their most deserving citizens. He has frequently opposed the measures both of CIMON and PERICLES; but it was in such a manner, that you saw, though he condemned the faults, he spared the men; and that his opposition proceeded not from ambition or caprice, but from an honest zeal for the public welfare. He is always well heard in the assemblies of the people, not from the art or eloquence of his orations, or a command of words, that rather overpowers than convinces the reason; but because he speaks to the purpose, and with an air and gesture, that shows he does not mean to impose upon his hearers, unless he is first deceived himself. Another quality, which distinguishes my friend, is a singular humanity: his door is open to every poor citizen, and his table prepared with a frugal hospitality to receive any stranger, who comes recommended either by his own deserts, or the request of a common friend. There is not a greater test of his benevolent temper, than that though he is an old man, he can encourage the mirth, and bear with the levities

of the young; nor a stronger instance of his good breeding, than that he does not abound in the narrative faculty of years, and is rather forward to promote the conversation of others, than to assume an air of superiority, by obliging them to listen to his. This is an imperfect sketch of PHILEMON's character: I pass next to that of my other companions.

CLINIAS is descended from one of the noblest families in Athens; and though both his rank and abilities entitle him to a considerable share in the government of his country, he devotes himself almost wholly to the improvement of science. He is an universal patron of arts; the philosopher, the poet, the painter, the historian, and the sculptor find alike the effects of his liberality. He is not contented to be an admirer of learning, he is likewise an excellent judge of it. I have seen him hold an argument with the sophist GORGIAS, and heard him dispute the doctrine of the soul's pre-existence with SOCRATES. ZEUXIS submits his most finished picture to his censure, and PHIDIAS would alter the drapery or attitude of a statue upon his advice. His table is frequented by all the learned in Athens; he abounds himself in the most elegant discourse, and has a peculiar art of setting the talents of others in the best light, and throwing something in their way, that may give them an opportunity to distinguish themselves. The two affairs, in which he most interested himself, were the accusation brought against PHIDIAS for defrauding the public in the gold employed about the

statue of MINERVA, and the charge against ANAXAGORAS for impiety: but neither his interest nor his eloquence, though supported by PERICLES, could save the artist from prison, or the philosopher from banishment.

PHILOCLÉS is a young man, who gives early marks of being a good officer. He has been employed in the service in Thrace, and behaved with so much gallantry at the siege of Potidæa, that the generals sent him to Athens with the news of its being taken. He served last summer in PHORMIO's fleet, and was recommended by him to the people to be made a trierarch in the squadron which is ready to sail to Lesbos; but CLEON had interest enough to disappoint him, for the sake of one BATTYLUS, a buffoon and a Lutanist. PHILOCLÉS however is not discouraged from pursuing a military life, but hopes for better success at the next equipment. In the mean time he designs to put in for the prize of the chariot-course at the Olympic games.

To complete our party, we have CHLORUS of the tribe of Pandion, a young man of wit and politeness, but of a character something singular: though he has a fund of good sense, he has one weakness, of affecting a general acquaintance amongst the rich and the powerful. You generally see him at some great man's elbow at the theatre, and he is very busy in laying the cushion for him. He boasts to this day of a letter he received from PERICLES, to thank him for a present of olives, and was extremely surprised at not hearing from his good friend

PHORMIO all the last campaign. He is well skilled in the genealogy of the Athenian families, and has promised we shall be supplied with the best intelligence from Athens during our absence.

I please myself with reflecting on the different views which my companions and myself propose from this journey. The humane **PHILEMON** is willing to be present at a ceremony, which he thinks tends to inculcate a respect for the gods, and to remind the different people which inhabit Greece of the ties, which ought to unite those who enjoy one common name, country, and religion. **CLINIAS** is pleased with the thoughts of extending his acquaintance amongst the learned and ingenious. **PHILOCLEES** flatters himself with success in a contest, that gives a lustre to the victor's name for his whole life. **CHLORUS** would be known to every one who displays a splendid equipage at Olympia. For my own part, all that I aim at is, to approve myself a faithful servant to **ARTAXERXES**, and no useless minister to Persia. Adieu.

P.

LETTER LXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Heliopolis.*

As the priests of Ægypt are the most considerable part of the body politic, and hold the chief rank and pre-eminence among the people, thou wilt be curious to know what are the different orders into which they are distinguished. And as these several orders are more strictly kept up according to the ancient establishment in the college of Heliopolis than in other places, I will endeavour to satisfy thy curiosity. To distinguish ^⁹ them according to the different ranks they appear in upon public processions and solemnities, I may mention first after the inferior degrees, the chief of the music-band, who always carries some musical instrument, as an ensign of his office; and in his custody are two of the books of HERMES, one containing hymns in honor of the gods, the other rules and precepts for the conduct of their kings. Next after this officer is the diviner, who carries an horoscope and a palm-branch, the symbols of astrology; and he is required to be thoroughly learned in four of the books of HERMES, that treat of that science; one, of the order and arrangement of the fixed stars; a second, of the phases of the moon and her

conjunctiōns with the sun; the other two, of the phenomena of their rising. After him comes next in order the sacred scribe. He wears wings fastened to his mitra, and carries a book with a rule, in which is ink, and a reed to write with. His province lies in the hieroglyphical knowledge, and he must be skilled in those books that treat of the doctrine of the globe, geography, the courses of the sun and moon, and of the five planets; he must know accurately the position of the several parts of Egypt, the nature of the Nile, the lands and districts appropriated to the priests, the exact measure and dimensions of them, with the uses and symbolical applications of all the sacred instruments. I may reckon next after him the master of the sacred wardrobe, who carries the rod of justice before the prophet, and a cup for libations. He is thoroughly versed in all the institutes of the Egyptian discipline, and all the rites of sacrifice; and there are ten kinds of service performed in honor to the gods, under which the whole of the Egyptian religion may be comprehended: the chief are sacrifices, offerings of first-fruits, hymns, prayers, processions, and public festivals. Last goes the prophet, followed by those who carry the bread of *distribution*, and he is the head and supreme over all. To him it belongs to interpret the laws of HERMES; and he not only presides in all matters of religion, but, according to the ancient constitution, holds a supreme judicature in all

causes without any further appeal, as chief ⁸⁰ of that high tribunal of thirty ⁸¹, which was composed of ten from each of the three principal cities, Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis. And though his power be limited, since Ægypt became subject to Persia, yet his decisions are still held infallible among the Ægyptians; as a token of which he wears a saphire ⁸², with the image or emblem of truth hung by a golden chain about his neck. The priests in general are habited in linen ⁸³, from a conceit that woollen garments would defile them. But the prophet likewise hath his head shaven, and wears on his feet slippers of the bark of the palm-tree, and carries at his breast a water-jar, wrapt in the folds of his garment ⁸⁴. The prophet is charged with the distribution of their revenues. To him belong the ten sacerdotal books. In those books are contained the laws, the doctrines of their mythology, and whatever relates to the discipline of the priests. These are the chief distinctions among the priests of Ægypt, or professors of the Hermaic doctrines. And there are upon the whole two-and-forty books of HERMES absolutely necessary to the literati of Ægypt: thirty-six of which number, containing all the philosophy, belong to the forementioned orders; the remaining six, which are physical,

⁸⁰ AELIAN. Var. Histor. lib. xiv. c. 34.

⁸¹ DIOD. SICUL. lib. i.

⁸² AELIAN. *ibid.* DIOD. SIC. *ibid.*

⁸³ HEROD. lib. ii. c. 37.

⁸⁴ APUL. METAM. lib. ii.

to the Pastophori, and they treat of the parts and structure of an human body, of diseases, of instruments, of medicaments, about the eyes, and lastly of women. To the forementioned orders may the whole priesthood of Ægypt be referred in their different ranks and degrees. But the Pastophori and Neocori, or sacred Ædiles, are of a much inferior rank, and to be reckoned among the subministrant orders, and the purifications required of them are much less tedious and painful ⁸¹. This then is that body of men so famous throughout the world, upon whom the original constitution of their country did entirely depend. Nor have they only governed that state in civil and religious matters, prescribing rules to princes, and exercising an absolute jurisdiction over the actions, and I had almost said opinions, of their own people; but have spread their influence abroad, and been in league with the law-givers of every later state. The grand policy of their religious initiations may be thought to have greatly promoted their designs, by means of which they could preserve a correspondence in distant countries, and be informed of whatever was for their purpose to know of the secrets, not only of states, but

⁸¹ CEREMON apud PORPHYR. de Abstin. lib. iv. § 8.
Τὸ μὲν κατ' ἀληθείαν φιλοσόφῃν ἐν τε τοῖς προφήταις
ἦν καὶ Ἱεροσολίταις, &c. Τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν τῶν ἱερέων τε
καὶ Πάσοφόρων καὶ Νεωκόρων πλῆθος καὶ ὑπαρχῶν τοῖς
θεοῖς καθαρῆναι μὲν ὁμοίως, καὶ γὰρ μὴν μετ' ἀκριβείας
καὶ ἐγκρατείας τοσῆς δὲ.

of private persons; thereby the more effectually to deceive and surprise those who resorted to them. And though they are less considerable now than they were formerly, yet they will still keep up the same disguise and artifice of a mysterious secrecy. There is no set of men seem more to affect a recluse and contemplative life, or to live more abstracted from all secular cares and concerns. They affect a singular preciseness in all their actions, a slowness in their steps and motions, much gravity in their mien and habits with a settled countenance, that seldom or ever is changed by smiles⁸⁶. The night they dedicate to the observation of the heavenly bodies, to certain ceremonies of purification, which they perform at stated hours; the day to the worship of their gods, whom they celebrate both at the sun-rising, and at noon, and in the afternoon, and at the close of the evening. The most general study that employs them at other times, is arithmetic and geometry, in which sciences they are always laboring to make further discoveries, and investigate new truths. And to them it must be confessed the greatest improvements in those sciences have been owing. Neither is there any art, of which they do not arrogate to themselves the first invention. For the most celebrated philosophers, poets, and law-givers of other nations are mentioned in the sacred registers of this college, as having resided sometime among them, and submitted to the

⁸⁶ CHAEREMON apud PORPHYR. lib. iv. § 6.

discipline of their order. Of the most eminent they have taken care to preserve a statue or picture, performed in the taste of the age wherein each illustrious person flourished. They have several uncouth figures with the names of ORPHEUS, MUSEUS, and MELAMPUS, engraven on the stone; and a DÆDALUS, in the manner of his statues, said to be his own work. Among the rest is the Spartan LYCURGUS, and the Athenian SOLON, PYTHAGORAS of Samos, and the immortal HOMER, who in his description of the infernal regions, which fable ORPHEUS introduced into the religious doctrines and mysteries of Greece, plainly alludes to this place and the adjoining territories.

I should observe, that the priests trust not their own memory to written registers, any more than that of other famous men. At Thebes I was shown a single pedigree⁸⁷, which entirely filled a large temple, deduced from father to son through more than 300 generations, and every succession in it represented by a coloss of wood dressed in the habit of the time when each Piromi, as they called them, or worthy, lived. To this pedigree not a few of the present race lay claim, and I think it is carried up to the sons of the Dioscuri. For as they boast that their mythology, with all their learning, was received from the first Thoth, or MERCURY, they likewise celebrate with a particular reverence the memory of an ancient order, called the Cabiri, who were

⁸⁷ Herod. Euterp. 143. 88 CHÆRONIUS

his counsellors and secretaries, and assisted in establishing that mythology, and the mysteries of a false religion, which from Ægypt and Phœnicia were propagated into Greece by them or their immediate descendants. They were eight brethren, sons of SYDYC, a contemporary of CHRONUS, of whom IOSORTHRUS or ÆSCULAPIUS was one, and they were the same with the Corybantes and the Dioscuri of the Greeks: and their worship with certain mysteries was very early established in Samothrace, Imbrus, and other isles of the Ægean sea. The Cabiri had a temple at Memphis⁸⁸, which was inaccessible to any except the priests. But CAMBYSES, when he ravaged the other temples of Ægypt, entered into this, and scoffing at their images, which were deformed like that of VULCAN, set fire to it. MERCURY was the first author of a celestial system of the world; and by him and the Cabiri the hero gods began first to be consecrated into sidereal divinities; and the priests scruple not to declare, that they had the bodies of those gods embalmed and deposited among them⁸⁹, and that they worshipped the relics of their bodies here on earth, while their souls shone as stars in heaven. Thus OSIRIS first was worshipped as the sun, though his relics were consecrated in the mysteries of ISIS; and his tomb shown at Nyssa in Arabia. And though he be acknowledged as a divinity in his own name, yet the priests intimate, that

⁸⁸ HEROD. lib. iii. c. 37.

⁸⁹ PLUTARCH. de ISID. & OSIRIDE.

he still receives divine honors in the worship of that luminary, to which the famous temple of HELIOPOLIS is dedicated. And indeed the name of OSIRIS signifies in their language a thing with many eyes ⁹⁰, with allusion to the sun, that darts its rays into every corner, and as it were surveys the whole earth. In the temple there is a throne of opal, which dazzles with an inexpressible brightness when the rays strike upon it. But there is no statue for the sun ⁹¹; and the priests say, they make no image for the sun and moon in their temples, because every man sees them daily in the heavens. Yet in the procession that is made for consulting the oracle of that god, a jointed statue of him is carried, which gives its answers by motions ⁹². In this ceremony the priests are attended by the principal persons of the country. They shave their heads, and observe a long continence before it begins. The pillars throughout the temple are of the Pyrite stone, the roof of gold and ivory, but diversified with inimitable art ⁹³. The doors are of silver ⁹⁴; round the sides are figured the twelve signs of the year, under the emblems of Ægyptian deities. Within the precincts of this famous temple is a stupendous obelisk dedicated to the sun by RAMESSES, one of their ancient kings, or rather

⁹⁰ DIOD. SIC. lib. i. c. 1.

⁹¹ LUCIAN. de Dea Syria.

⁹² MACROB. SATURN. lib. i. c. 23.

⁹³ KIRCHER, Obelisc. Pamphil. lib. i. c. 5.

⁹⁴ OVID. Metam. descript. regisæ solis.

intended for a monument to perpetuate his own honor. The height of it is ninety-nine feet, and each of the sides four cubits. Every side is divided into three rows with hieroglyphical figures and inscriptions. RAMESES is entitled upon it, *Lord of the world, guardian of Egypt, and conqueror of foreign nations*, with many other glorious characters, that set him forth as a person highly favored by the gods, and nearly related to them, as it was customary from the earliest times to flatter their kings with a divine original. CAMBYSES, when he attacked this city, and had set fire to the buildings, before it reached the obelisk, out of a particular veneration for that magnificent pile, ordered the flames to be extinguished. Adieu.

L.

LETTER LXVI.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. *From Megara.*

As I imagined thy curiosity will be excited to know the particulars of our Olympic expedition, I shall write a regular account of what occurs most remarkable during the course of it; and I desire thou wilt communicate a copy of this letter to the chief scribe.

In the morning, before we began our journey, PHILEMON, who strictly adheres, not only to the essentials of religion, but to every point of

decency which an exact observance of the ceremonial part requires, invited us to partake in a sacrifice to MERCURY and HECATE, the gods protectors of travellers, at his house. When that was finished we set out, and leaving the city at the western gate, soon struck into the road which leads to Eleusis. The country about Athens wears at present a very disagreeable aspect, from the frequent incursions of the Peloponnesian army. The Demoi or villages, the habitations of the tribes before they were united by THESEUS, are most of them in ruins; the lands lie uncultivated, and the laborers are dispersed. PHILEMON, as we passed along, frequently deplored in tears the calamities of war, and sometimes pointed out to us, with a pious regard, a grove or fountain sacred to some local deity, or the sepulchre of an old hero, that invites travellers to stop, and pay a short veneration. The traditions of the country relating to these ancient monuments, though they are interesting to a Grecian, whom they remind of some religious institution, or remarkable fact in his own history, would afford but little entertainment to a stranger; and therefore I shall only mention such as are particularly remarkable. On one side of the way is a tomb erected to the herald ANTHEMOCRITUS, killed (as the Athenians affirm) by the Megareans, to whom he was sent on an embassy just before the breaking out of this war. A little further you meet with an altar to ZEPHYRUS, and a rustic temple to CERES, in memory of her wanderings in search of PROSERPINE.

On

On the other side of the river Cephissus you may observe an altar to JUPITER *the placable*, where THESEUS is said to have expiated himself after the murder of the robber SINIS, his relation. Eleusis is a small town, celebrated for the mysteries performed there to the honor of CERES and PROSERPINE. As it is lawful for none but the initiated to enter into the temple and mystic cell, which they tell you is capable of holding as many people as a theatre, I can give no account of the inside. The front is sumptuous, and adorned with a large portico of Doric pillars. The country people showed us here the threshing-floor of TRIPTOLEMUS the son of CERES, and a field where the first crop ever sown in Greece sprung up. In memory of so signal an event, some barley out of this very field is made into cakes, and used in the mysterious sacrifices. The town itself receives its name from ELEUSIS, the son of MERCURY and a sea nymph, and came into the Athenian possession in the reign of ERECTHEUS, upon condition that the family of EUMOLPUS, then priest of CERES, should enjoy the privilege for ever of presiding at the mysteries. After leaving Eleusis we soon entered the territory of Megara, which formerly belonged to the Athenians, but in the time of CODRUS the Peloponnesians expelled them, and peopled Megara with a Corinthian colony. As one of the pretended causes of the war is the severe decree made at the motion of PERICLES against the Megareans, which the Lacedæmonians demanded to have repealed, the people of this

place are extremely incensed against the Athenians, who in return have added a clause to their generals' oath, that they shall annually invade Megara. Notwithstanding this enmity between the two republics is carried to so vast a height, we found a very hospitable reception at the house of a friend of CLINIAS, and have spent two days in surveying the temples, and other public structures of the place. The city stands on a hill, the streets are spacious, and adorned with some buildings of note. Not far from the gate where we entered, is a temple dedicated to DIANA SOSPITA, or the Saviour, upon an extraordinary occasion. Whilst MAR-
DONIUS lay encamped at Thebes, a party of his troops, that had wasted the country round Megara, being upon their retreat, lost their way in the dark; and either confounded by their fears, or, as the inhabitants report, misled by a delusion from the goddess, imagined that they saw a band of enemies drawn up against them: under this mistake they discharged their javelins at the neighbouring rocks, which returned a sound like the groans of dying men. They continued this fanciful fight till day-break. When they had wasted their weapons, a real one ensued; for in this unarmed condition they were attacked, and easily routed by the Megareans. Hard by is a grove and temple sacred to JUPITER. The statue of that god, begun by THEOCOSIMUS of Megara, assisted by PHIDIAS, is left unfinished, because the public revenues and the estates of private persons are so exhausted by the continuance of the war, that

they are not able to support the expense of it. The citadel, which takes in a large space of ground, contains several public buildings, as the monument of *ALCMENA* the mother of *HERCULES*, that of *HIPPOLITA* the Amazon, and of *TEREUS* the husband of *PROGNE*. Here stand likewise the Prytaneum, and a temple of *APOLLO*. In the forum is the tomb of *CHOROEBUS*, an ancient hero, who killed a dreadful monster called the *Pœna*, that was sent by *APOLLO* to ravage *Argolis*. The story is told in verse upon the monument, and the bas-relief, representing the fight between *CHOROEBUS* and the *Pœna*, is esteemed the most ancient piece of sculpture in Greece. I have been down at *Nisæa*, their port and arsenal; it stands lower than the town, and is well furnished with naval stores. A trireme is just come in with advice, that the Athenian fleet is sailed with a fair wind for *Lesbos*. We shall stay here a day more, and then proceed for *Corinth*, which is our next stage: from thence I shall write to the chief scribe, as the customs and antiquities of that city will afford ample materials for the observation of inquisitive travellers.

I cannot give thee a better idea of the humanity and politeness, for which the Grecians are so famous, than by concluding with an account of the manner in which strangers of any distinction are received in the towns through which they pass. The person who entertains meets his company at the door of his house, and conducts them into the hall, where he

presents them with bread, wine, and salt, which is considered as a sacrifice or libation to JUPITER XENIOS, or the Hospitable. Then they refresh themselves after the fatigues of the journey by bathing, which is followed by supper, accompanied with music, or the enlivening poetry of some wandering *Aoidos*, or bard. It is customary at parting for the host and his guests to interchange some little presents, to divide a piece of money or ivory, as a pledge of eternal friendship. So inviolably are the rites of hospitality preserved, that war itself does not destroy them. The Greeks, potent satrap, cannot be sufficiently commended for paying this strict regard to those common ties that distinguish mankind from the brutes, and which are agreeable to the practice of the remotest ages, as well as to the condition of our nature. Adieu.

P.

LETTER LXVII.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. *From Corinth.*

WE have been arrived at Corinth some days, which is esteemed one of the richest, largest, and most beautiful cities in Greece. Its situation, thou must have heard, is very extraordinary. It stands upon a neck of land about five miles over, which joins Peloponnesus to the rest of Greece. This isthmus lies between

the two bays, the Crissæan and the Saronic, the one formed by the Ionian, the other by the Ægean sea. Upon each of these bays the Corinthians have an harbour, one called Lechæum, and the other Cenchreæ. The latter is the most considerable. Here stands likewise a temple to NEPTUNE, where the statues of the victors at the Isthmian games are erected; a theatre, and a stadium. The approach to the town through a grove of cypress trees is very pleasant. The buildings are most of them elegant and spacious, and, as well as the statues and pictures, finished by the best masters; for this place, amongst other advantages, is celebrated for producing eminent artists in architecture, painting, and sculpture. By the favor of CHYLON, one of the magistrates, at whose house we are lodged, I have surveyed all the curiosities of Corinth, and shall give thee an account of the most remarkable. Several of their public edifices stand round the forum. In the middle is a statue of MINERVA, with the muses carved on the base of the pedestal. Next to this is an aqueduct adorned with a brazen NEPTUNE, at whose feet lies a dolphin, that spouts out water. On each side arise the superb temples of VENUS, FORTUNE, and one dedicated to all the gods. The fountain of Priene lies at the foot of the craggy mountain Acrocorinthus: it is so named from the nymph PRIENE, who lamented the death of her daughter, killed accidentally at the chase by DIANA, with such torrents of tears, that she was turned into a spring. The water

is remarkable for the sweetness of its taste. The fountain is adorned with white marble, a statue of APOLLO, and a bas-relief representing the fight between ULYSSES and the suitors.

The citadel is built upon the top of ACROCORINTHUS; and is reckoned, both by the natural situation of the place, and the advantages it has received from art, impregnable. From hence you have the finest prospect imaginable of the Ionian and Ægean seas. Whilst we were viewing the citadel, we saw three Corinthian gallies engaged with as many Athenian; the latter seemed to be superior, till two more sailing from Cenchrea to join their countrymen, they were obliged to bear away before the reinforcement came up. The baths at Corinth are magnificent, particularly those of NEPTUNE; at the entrance are two statues of the god leaning on an anchor, and DIANA in an hunting dress. The aqueducts and fountains are numerous, and give a coolness to the city in the greatest heats of summer. One, called the fountain of Lerna, is surrounded with rows of trees, and supported by marble columns, and there are seats round it, covered with tapestry. Its neighbourhood to the gymnasium and music theatre render it the most frequented of any in the city. They boast here of several pieces of the sculptor DÆDALUS, which, though rough and unpolished, show a fire and spirit that supply the want of correctness.

The Corinthians are much inclined to ease and diversion; the masculine simplicity of Sparta is unknown to them, neither do they

cultivate learning like the Athenians. VENUS is the goddess whom they adore most fervently; their streets are crowded with her temples, and almost every day in the kalendar is marked by some festival to her honor. The hospitality, which so particularly distinguishes the Greeks, prevails here in the same degree that it does every where else. Our quality of enemies does not hinder us from being received with the politeness of neighbours and friends; and thou mayest imagine there are no small numbers of Athenians, who take this place in their way to Olympia. I have found no difficulty in prevailing with my company to stay here some days longer. I propose by it to gain time for making a dispatch to the chief scribe. My delay proceeds likewise from a more private motive: HIPPIAS sends me word, that he will join our Olympic party from Ephesus in a few days. We shall afterwards proceed directly through Argolis, Achaia, and Elis, to the games. I kiss thy robe, noble satrap, and bid thee adieu, wishing thou mayest find the same entertainment in my letters that I receive from the circumstances which occasion them.

P.

LETTER LXVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Corinth.*

THE city where I now am, potent lord, hath undergone several revolutions in its government. From a little obscure town called Ephyra, it was raised into a kingdom by SISYPHUS, whose posterity reigned over it near two hundred years. They were dispossessed by the Heraclidæ, or descendants of HERCULES; and these in their turn gave way to the Bacchidæ, a noble Corinthian family, which took the administration of affairs into their hands, and, elected an annual magistrate out of their own body, whom they called the Prytanis. During their government, the Corinthians planted the two famous colonies of Syracuse and Corcyra, which are both grown to such a height of power and wealth, as to have no sort of dependance on their mother city. Thou knowest, that the quarrels of the latter with Corinth, relating to Epidamnus, were the first sparks that set Greece in a flame. CYPSELUS the son of LABDA, of the race of the Bacchidæ, who for her deformity had been married out of it, fulfilled the Delphic oracle, by dissolving this aristocracy, and usurping the throne. Through the mildness of his temper, and the popularity of his behaviour, he reigned quietly thirty years, and left the crown at his death to his son PERIANDER. The Corinthians still retain

the utmost abhorrence for the memory of this tyrant. His fear of the people made him always keep a strong guard about his person, and take off the heads of the most eminent citizens. Nor was his cruelty confined to the public; it exerted itself equally in private life. He put his wife MELISSA to death at the instigation of his concubines, and banished his son LYCOPHRON to Corcyra, for resenting the ill-treatment of his mother. PERIANDER afterwards sent for him to settle the succession upon him; but the Corcyreans, apprehensive that the old tyrant would come and reign over them, prevented it by killing the young prince. This news so afflicted the father, that he died for grief at the age of fourscore. The Corinthians took hold of so favorable an opportunity to resume their liberties, and established a government, which is a mixture of aristocracy and democracy. The senate is perpetual, and chosen out of a certain number of the most ancient families; but the assemblies of the people have a large share of power.

The situation and naval force of Corinth render it one of the most considerable states in Greece. By the former they command the Ionian and Ægean seas, and possess the only pass of communication between Peloponnesus and the continent; for which reason the citadel, or Acrocorinthus, is usually called the Eye, and the city the Fetter, of Greece. Had XERXES, after forcing the straits of Thermopylæ, marched directly to the Isthmus, before the united forces of Greece were assembled there,

and the fortifications completed, which were raised to defend the country, he must have made himself master of Corinth, and would then have had two fine harbours for his ships to lie in, and a secure retreat for his land army. Had he even lost a battle, he might have waited here for reinforcements; nor would the lord of millions have been reduced to the necessity of crossing the Hellespont in a fishing-boat. Suffer not, illusirious satrap, the misfortunes of our ancestors to discourage those who succeed them; let them rather serve to improve their conduct. When Persia would revenge the shame which she suffered at Salamis, this should be her first enterprize; and to render the success more assured, I sent plans of the citadel, and the entrance into the ports of Lechæum, and Cenchrea, which with great difficulty I have obtained. The Corinthian fleet is at present the most considerable in Greece, next to the Athenian. They fitted out twenty-five gallies against XERXES, made an equipment of sixty in the war with Corcyra, and engaged PHORMIO last year with seventy sail.

I transmit to thee enclosed the intelligence which our last letters brought from Athens, by which thou mayest perceive the state of affairs there since my departure; and when I write from Olympia, I shall use the same method. Farewel.

Extract of a Letter from Athens.

A trireme is arrived from CLIPPIDES, with advice, that upon his arrival before Mitylene,

he found the inhabitants apprized of his expedition, and that they had deferred their annual solemnity; that they utterly refused to comply with his demands, and had even attempted to surprise some of his ships, which by stress of weather were separated from the rest, but were soon repulsed. As he apprehended he had not strength to reduce the island, he had complied with their offer of making a suspension of arms, and sending over deputies to Athens.

Extract of another Letter.

The deputies of Lesbos are just upon their departure, without success. We suspect that they only came to gain time, since we have certain information that their ambassadors are on their way to the general assembly of the allies at Olympia. We are preparing a reinforcement of twenty gallies for CLIPPIDES, and hear that ten from Corcyra have joined him; so that the port of Mitylene is entirely blocked up.

P.

LETTER LXIX.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. *From Olympia.*

As I am willing to hope that my correspondence is not disagreeable, I shall proceed to lay before thee some farther particulars of my Olympic expedition. The first town of note we arrived at, after leaving Corinth, was Sicyon, a large and flourishing city, formerly governed by kings, but now a republican state. From thence we crossed the river Asopus, and proceeded through the delightful plains of Arcadia, and the territory of Elis, to Olympia. We have found sufficient employment since our arrival, in viewing the antiquities and curiosities of the place, particularly the temple of JUPITER OLYMPIUS, the grove called Altis, wherein it is built, and the plain of Pelops. The architect of this temple was LIBO the Elean. It is covered on the roof with marble cut in the form of tiles, and the shell of the structure is white stone; on the top of the pediment is a statue, Victory holding a golden buckler, engraven with Medusa's head; a present of the Lacedæmonians and Argives after the battle of Tanagra, to the Athenians. The pediment of the principal front is adorned with sculpture, representing the story of PELOPS winning the daughter of OENOMAUS king of Elis, at the chariot course. It is said to be the work of a native of Mendez, a city in Thrace. In the pediment of the back

front, is the battle of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, executed by ALCAMENES, a celebrated Athenian sculptor. Two brazen gates afford a spacious entrance into the body of the temple, and two ranges of columns, supporting two galleries raised to a very considerable height, lead up to the throne of JUPITER. The eyes of every spectator must be immediately struck with the statue of that deity at the upper end, which the nearer it is approached the more it excites admiration. This statue is universally esteemed the master-piece of PHIDIAS, who took his idea of it from a sublime description in HOMER of that god. The materials are gold and ivory. The image has on its head a crown of gold resembling the branches of an olive tree. In his right hand he holds a Victory, formed of gold and ivory; in his left a sceptre, exquisitely polished, inlaid with a variety of metals, and surmounted with an eagle. The mantle is gold, embroidered with various animals and flowers. There is a serene majesty in the look, which at once creates love and veneration, and puts one in mind of HOMER's epithet for him, *The father of gods and men*. The throne is answerable to the magnificence of the deity who fills it. It is embellished on all sides with different ornaments. At the four corners of the throne are seen the graces and hours in a circling dance; at the bottom are two lions, one of which holds a shield in his paw, whereon is sculptured the battle of THESEUS and the Amazons. Before all these, is raised an enclosure breast-high, where the

pencil of PANÆNUS has exerted itself in painting such subjects as may have a proper effect to animate those spectators who intend to enter the lists. There is HERCULES relieving PROMETHEUS; the same hero supporting the globe, in the room of ATLAS. The priest who accompanied us, told us, that PHIDIAS, after he had finished the statue, having begged of JUPITER to give him some token that his workmanship had not displeased him, immediately the pavement near him was struck with lightning; and in memory of the miracle, a brazen urn was placed over the spot. I could not help looking at a row of pillars in the sanctuary, which are hung round with tablets of treaties between the Grecian states, deposited, as it were, under the guardianship of JUPITER. But their reverence to the supreme deity is not so powerful an incitement to preserve the articles of them inviolate, as their interest or resentment is to induce them to infringe them. Our company was with difficulty drawn away from viewing these wonderful performances, which do so much honor to the Grecian masters, to walk over the rest of the temple, and particularly to survey that noble collection of presents and offerings, which are made either by victors at the games, to show their gratitude, or by princes and foreign states, to testify their veneration to the god. There are laid up in the sacred treasury, vases embossed with gold, robes stiff with embroidery and gems, statues and pictures, which not only dazzle, but fatigue the sight. You see particularly a chariot and

four brazen horses, sent by CYNISCA, daughter of ARCHIDAMUS king of Sparta, the first person of her sex who won the chariot-prize at Olympia.

When we had satisfied our curiosity within the temple, we were led out of a gate in the northern side into the Pelopion, or plain of Pelops, which is planted with rows of trees, interspersed with innumerable altars and statues of divinities and heroes. The Pelopion and Altis enclose above sixty of the former alone, consecrated to the different deities of Greece. Near the gate stands an altar to Olympian JUPITER, of a very singular structure; for it is wholly built out of ashes from the thighs of the sacrificed victims. Several steps lead to the top; the first half are stone, the others are made of a cement of ashes, mixed with water from the river Alpheus, which runs by Olympia round the walls of the Altis. And in the neighbourhood of it are erected the statues of the most renowned amongst those who have gained prizes at the games, with inscriptions signifying the number of crowns they have won, and sometimes that they were the first who conquered at such an exercise. Here is one of the famous MILO of Crotona, who, after winning six prizes at Olympia, and as many at Delphi, is come, though advanced in years, to put in his claim for the thirteenth victory. A little way out of the town, near the mountain Cronius, are monuments to the eternal infamy of such as either by fraud or corruption have obtained the prize; and the expenses

are defrayed out of the fines set upon them. An inscription on the statue of one EUPOLUS records, that he had bribed three of his competitors at wrestling, and was the first who had tainted the sanctity of the games. It concludes with an admonition, that the Olympic palm was not to be acquired by money, but address and vigor alone. I shall just mention the temple of JUNO, which stands north of the Pelopion, whose splendor and magnificence is far eclipsed by that of the thunderer. The statues are many of them in the old taste. The greatest rarity is a coffer, presented by CYPSELUS tyrant of Corinth, which would take up a letter to describe fully: the sides are ornamented in the richest manner with painting and has-reliefs, that include the most remarkable subjects in the fabulous history of Greece. In the way leading to the Prytaneum is a statue of JUPITER, erected at the joint cost of the Grecian states that fought against MARDONIUS at Plataea. The names of them, beginning with the Lacedæmonians, followed by the Athenians and the rest in order, are engraved on the basis of the pedestal.

I can assure thee, potent lord, that nothing I have yet seen in Greece or Asia equals in any degree the magnificence and elegance that appear in the structures here. One may say, that architecture, painting, and sculpture, have not only united their utmost efforts, but even exhausted the secrets of their arts, to render Olympia worthy its tutelar deity, and the games exhibited to his honor. I have neither
memory

memory nor leifure to relate the tenth part of the various entertainment which this place affords me; and from what I have already said, thou wilt not wonder that every fifth year renders it the universal resort both of natives and foreigners. I cannot conclude more properly, than by laying before thee the best account I am able to collect upon the spot, of the origin and alterations which have happened in these ancient and celebrated games. There are two stories equally prevalent in the country relating to their first institution; the one ascribes it to the Curetes, JUPITER's tutors; the other to the god himself, after the defeat of the Titans. They suffered afterwards long interruptions, and were severally renewed by HERCULES, and PELOPS, when he had won HIPPODAMIA, the daughter of OENOMAEUS, at a chariot-race. This part of their history is fabulous and uncertain; but I think all agree that they were established on their present footing by IPHITUS, a descendant of OXYLUS, king of Elis, about four hundred and eight years after the taking of Troy. It was at that period they took a regular form; then gymnasiums and places of exercise were set up, and directors of the games, or Hellanodicæ, appointed. Those officers are now nine in number, chosen by lot from amongst the principal inhabitants of Elis, whose territory is declared sacred, and those accounted impious and sacrilegious who invade it. From enjoying these honors and immunities, Elis is become one of the best peopled states in Greece. Every one, of what

nation or quality soever, who intends to be a competitor in the games, is obliged to present himself before the magistrates in the Prytaneum, and take an oath at the altar of JUPITER there, that he had for the ten preceding months performed a kind of novitiate in the exercises, which he proposes, to appear in at the games; and that he would strictly adhere to the terms prescribed for each exercise. Then a herald with a loud voice demands, if no one present can accuse the candidate of any crime or misdemeanor, which renders him unworthy to contend for the crown of olive. If no objections are made, the name of the person is enrolled in a public register, and himself dismissed till the day of trial. The wrestlers are divided into two classes, that of children, and that of men; the former are admitted from the age of twelve to seventeen. Women are not allowed, under pain of death, to be present at any part of the solemnity.

As the games, which are always fixed for the full moon in Ekatombeon, will begin in a few days, thou mayest expect that this letter will soon be followed by another, containing a full account of the whole representation. Farewel. P.

LETTER LXX.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

I CAN no longer contain myself, CLEANDER, from returning my thanks for those agreeable letters I have received from thee on thy journey to Olympia. I value thy friendship above all I have contracted, since it is so far from cooling in a foreign climate, that it grows warmer in absence, and perpetually turns thee back to thy country and acquaintance, amidst a variety of new objects to engage thy attention.

I imagine ere this time thou art informed of Sacas's conspiracy by the noble GOBRIAS, and the several steps which have been already taken in that affair. The queen-mother and the fair Damascan having found the king inexorable to their prayers in favor of the criminal, at last withdrew their intercession. Nothing then remained but to put the sentence of the supreme council in execution; however, it was first thought proper that he should be privately examined before MEGABYZUS and the chief scribe. Upon that occasion, I am told, discoveries of importance were extorted from him by the rack; and that he has accused many of the satraps of Media, who were involved in the same guilt. This report is a good deal confirmed by the express, who went lately into that province with orders from our potent monarch, that PANDATES, MINDUS, and OXYATHRES, three Median lords, should repair to

Babylon without delay. He brings word, that the latter is fled, and that his two accomplices, not suspecting the danger, are secured by a strong guard. GORYAS is much busied in watching the intrigues of those, who are endeavouring to trace out from what quarter these horrid practices were laid open. A few days since the perfidious eunuch received the just reward of his treasons, and was boated, according to the severe penalties inflicted on traitors by the law of Persia. The hunting seat, that belonged to him in the forest of Nisa, and all his riches, are confiscated to the king's use, which are valued at more than an hundred thousand darics. I have myself some design of applying for a grant of the former, as it will be a very convenient recess for me, whenever a change in the ministry, the death of my royal master, or the infirmities of old age, oblige me to leave the toilsome attendance of a court-life.

PYRACMON the Lacedæmonian agent is gone back to Sparta, without an audience of leave. For as he has never appeared regularly in the character of a public minister during his stay here, by reason of his obstinate refusal to comply with the ceremony of prostration at his arrival, it was impossible for me to admit him into the king's presence. At the same time that the ruling magistrates in Lacedæmon have recalled PYRACMON, they have sent us another in his room, whose name is NICANDER. From the judgment I have been able to form of him, he is as strange a creature as his countryman,

and is possessed of all the uncouthness and indelicacy, which seem inherent in every member of that military republic. As soon as he came within the walls of the palace, he desired to be presented to ARTAXERXES as a commissioner from Thebes, that he might avoid going through the forms of an audience in the quality of a Lacedæmonian; and being asked, if he had brought any powers from that state to treat with the Great King; he replied, Yes, but that his instructions were more considerable from his native city. I was ordered by the ministers of our sublime court to tell him, that this was regarded as a trifling evasion of the homage paid to our sovereign by the ministers of every state; and that though he intended it to preserve (as he proudly thought) the dignity of a Spartan, yet such mean and shifting arts were much below the character of politeness, which the Greeks assumed to themselves; and he must consent to be received as an Ambassador from Lacedæmon, or not at all. The delivery of this message had its due weight; and in a surly manner he submitted. But I observed, when I conducted him into the royal chamber, agreeably to the usual ceremony, he dropped a ring, which he wore upon his finger, and in stooping to recover it, made an awkward reverence to our monarch. I saw immediately, by the resentment which sparkled in the king's eyes, that this behaviour gave offence, and the conference was short; but that wise counsellor MEGABYZUS

has advised him to suffer reasons of policy to supersede the motions of anger.

To give thee a further insight into the manners of the man, I must tell thee of a circumstance, which will excite thy laughter; that in all his conversations with GOBRYAS he disdains the offered civility of that courteous minister, by throwing his body on the floor of the apartment, where they meet together, instead of resting himself upon the sofa of state. It was intimated to me one day, that it would be proper to invite NICANDER to an entertainment of dancing and music, which was ordered that evening in the magnificent hall of DARIUS. I took INTAPHERNES along with me, and we went about noon to wait upon NICANDER. We were introduced to him without any form, and found him dining alone very heartily on a mess of the famous black broth, which I conjecture from the coarse appearance of it must be a detestable repast to any but a Lacedæmonian stomach. The person who attended him, was an Helot slave, whom he had brought along with him to Babylon, because of his happy talent in preparing it. He received my invitation very coldly, and answered me with roughness, declaring, that he came upon a matter of business, not a party of pleasure. We left him with a contempt for the narrowness of his temper, and a thorough persuasion of his incapacity to serve in foreign negotiations. CRATIPPUS, the sophist of Rhodes, who has been employed for some time in GOBRYAS's office, informed me yesterday under the seal

of secrecy, that he was going upon a private expedition to Sparta; and that he should be very glad to maintain a correspondence with one, whom he had so high an opinion of as yourself. He said, although that city was at a considerable distance from Athens, yet, as he fancied you and he should be almost the only well-wishers to the king of Persia in the territories of Greece, he would certainly find a method of communicating his thoughts to you frequently and without reserve. I congratulate thee, CLEANDER, on being joint-laborer with a person of CRATIPPUS's uncommon parts and learning. He is a man of such dexterity and address, that whether he converses with the superstitious Egyptians, or the effeminate Ionians, whether he conforms to the simplicity of the Persians, or the splendor of the Medes, he is equally cheerful and agreeable. In a word, he seems designed by nature for a citizen of the world; and I dare say, will be as much pleased with the water-creffes and brown loaves of Sparta, as with all the rich wines and luxury of Asia. Such a character as this, which I describe to thee, can only be the result of good sense and a superior understanding.

I hope thou and I, my friend, shall never know, what it is to be like the despicable NICANDER, but rather imitate the rational turn of CRATIPPUS. The manners of various nations are generally as different as their political interests; and it argues a littleness of mind, to think the peculiarities of one's own country are drawn out of the depths of wisdom, while

the customs of another deserve to be branded with folly. Thou wilt smile perhaps at a courtier, who concludes with the spirit of a philosopher; but I leave it to thy determination, whether a low partiality to the manners of those who inhabit one spot upon the globe, in opposition to the rest of the world, is not a kind of immorality, as well as a subject of ridicule.

From Babylon.

C.

LETTER LXXI.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

I Do not know, whether I am more pleased or ashamed at the letters I receive from thee. I ought not to want a spur to such an unequal correspondence; for while thou transmittest to me foreign arts and knowledge, the boasted commodities of Greece, all the return I make is from the cheap and familiar produce of our own country. They letters convince me of the vanity of Greece in valuing herself upon science, as her property, which thou hast gained such an insight into, (though it is matter of amusement to thee, rather than any part of thy business,) that thou couldst easily transplant it hither, were it compatible with the policy of our government. But the true Persian maxims would make the refinements of Greece needless by contracting our wants, and securing

us from the encroachments of luxury, which require so many ministering and attendant arts in her retinue. To speak truth, and draw the bow, is indeed an abridgment of a true Persian education; which implies, that our bodies should be fitted for the service of our country, and our minds habituated to sincerity and virtue. The faculties of man, I presume, cannot be laid out in a more laudable service. How little pleasing soever the simplicity of this plan may be to a Greek, the great ends may more certainly, and with less danger of corruption, be attained by it, which they propose to themselves by more indirect and laborious methods of study. I suppose the people of Athens desire to hear truth, when they listen to their orators, and these are thought best qualified to deliver it; yet no man will say, that to speak truth is an art, or requires any labor of the brain. What then is meant by the talent of eloquence, which is attained with such difficulty? If it be to conceal truth, or to disguise falsehood, so that it shall not be known, or to give it so amiable a dress, that we shall receive it knowingly; this indeed requires skill, but is no great accomplishment; nor should I think myself at all obliged to a man for being at so much pains to lead me out of my way. I guess the young philosopher you speak of is not addicted to oratory. Doth SOCRATES, who professes and teaches others to study themselves, affect it? I scarce believe so: the man, who searches his own breast, finds, that truth has a right to precedence there, and that the tongue

should interpret the heart. SOCRATES has prudently disengaged himself from the boasted wisdom of his country, by professing his ignorance and disregard of it, in comparison of that which tends immediately to the cultivation of the mind, and establishing an universal rule for human actions. This no doubt must be his aim, and he seems to bid fair for success; for he, who would prescribe to others, must learn from himself what maxims he could be content to be governed by. He must first draw reason from his own breast; and then it will be ratified by common consent, when it comes to be re-applied to the understanding of others. The sophist imposes upon us false principles; and if our reason be too busy in examining them, he entangles it in inextricable subtilties. The legislator demands our assent by the terror of his power; but SOCRATES, like a true rationalist, affects not to subdue our passions, without leaving every man an appeal to his own judgment, and thereby distinguishes the moralist from the politic legislator and false philosopher, who equally aim at subjecting us to their own absolute authority, under pretence of reforming our prejudices. This wise man's study of himself may be attended with great consequences in bringing to light the dictates of reason, which are of undeniable authority, and nothing less than the original revelation of OROMASDES. The divine will being thus ascertained, the wise and virtuous will have a rational expectation of a recompence to their obedience; and the well-grounded hope of this

reward will add weight to the reasons of the moralist, and confirm his whole system. It is easy for us, whom uncorrupt traditions and the books of ZOROASTER have instructed in worthy notions of the Deity, to think what is so agreeable to our reason may be traced out by it alone. But if human reason is insufficient to penetrate so far into the divine œconomy, may OROMASDES put himself in the way of this glorious inquirer; and thus perhaps shall his doctrine diffuse itself universally, and the holy flame be lighted up in the temples of the west. Thou seemest, CLEANDER, to have no mean opinion of the Greek philosophers, and perhaps mayest think them worth undeceiving in some wrong conceptions of the Persian religion. When OTANES, the great descendant of ZERDUSHT, accompanied XERXES into Greece, he shed the first dawn of divine light amongst them; but they are perpetually misinformed by travellers, who attend only to appearances, and represent some external rites, which they observe amongst us, as the substance of our worship. I have been told, they have adopted some of the rites of Ægypt which the Ægyptians themselves used only as a symbol; so insensible are they to what is mysterious and exalted. They have no other than visible objects of adoration; and their apprehension seems at a loss in every thing that is veiled from the sense. Thus because we religiously preserve the purity of the elements, and think it impious by any unnatural commixture to pollute them, which in the creation

were separated and ordered to be kept without defilement, they call us worshippers of these elements; a mistake into which HERODOTUS himself is fallen. I once met with a Greek, whose ignorance of my character made him use his national freedom towards me: Greece, said he, has no reason to regret the attempts which Persia has made on her liberty, since she has been rewarded with immortal honor; and the barbarity of XERXES will be an eternal stain to Persia, who destroyed all the temples of Greece, from a pretended dislike of the use of them, while still they were approved in Persia. I told him, they were destroyed, because they were said to contain a God within them, which was found to be no other perhaps than an image of wood, which had been made and placed there by its worshippers. To this he gave me what he thought a very sufficient answer, that, instead of burning the temples, XERXES should have set fire to the images, which would in that condition have been fit objects for a Persian worshipper. The petulance of the man betrayed his ignorance, who had not made himself so far acquainted with us, as to know, that fire was a sacred symbol, which ZERDUSHT brought down from heaven, to remind us, that this element is not more necessary to the bodies, than the cherishing influence of the Deity is to the souls of men.

May thy wisdom, CLEANDER, contribute to reduce these contemptuous Greeks to the yoke of Persia, which they have hitherto surprisingly escaped. Who would have thought

but XERXES had joined them to his dominions, when he linked the two continents together with his fleet! How near was DATIS executing his great master's order, who was commanded to send the inhabitants of Athens and Eretria in chains to Persia? Eretria was encompassed and taken, and all its proud citizens sent hither, to gratify the will of their conqueror, where they now mourn their servitude. And had success accompanied our arms at Marathon, the city, where thou now residest, had been unpeopled, and her sons transported to cultivate the desert lands of Persia, or, scattered over our numerous provinces, had been utterly deprived of all hope of uniting themselves again into a community. Farewel.

From Balch.

H.

LETTER LXXII

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THE games, which raised so great an expectation, and drew together such a multitude of spectators, are now over; and I believe most of those, who were present, are employed like me in giving an account to their absent friends, of the remarkable circumstances that attended them. On the day appointed for the opening of the games, the whole assembly had early taken their places in the stadium of Olympia. The spot, where the combatants

engage, is in the form of an arena or pit, and covered with sand. The seats rise round it one above another. The two first days out of the five allotted for the celebration of this solemnity, were appointed for the wrestling and boxing. The names of the candidates for the prize in those exercises, were read over before the people by a herald. Then a silver urn was produced, containing a number of balls equal to that of the combatants, and each pair was matched together, who drew out two balls, on which the same letters of the alphabet were inscribed. After the competitors had rendered their bodies firm and supple by rubbing and pouring oil upon them, they besmeared them with fine sand, to give the better hold for grappling. Several matches went forward at the same time. To obtain the victory it is requisite to give two falls, and renew the combat three times. If a wrestler, who is thrown, pulls his adversary down with him, they must grapple together upon the ground, till one of them getting uppermost constrains the other to ask for mercy. Then the acclamations of the spectators, which continue with various interruptions whilst the trial of skill lasts, are redoubled. The Hellanodicae present the victor with the crown of olive, a branch of palm, and a robe, on the very spot where he was engaged. In this equipage, preceded by a herald, he crosses the stadium amidst the shouts and praises of that innumerable concourse of people. His name and country are proclaimed by sound of trumpet; flowers, girdles, money,

and other presents of that nature, are thrown upon him as he passes along. An odd accident happened to MILO of Crotona. That famous wrestler presented himself, but found no antagonist; upon which the presidents of the games called him to present him with the crown, but as he advanced forwards to receive it, he fell down. The people immediately cried out, that one, who could not keep himself upon his legs, did not deserve the honors due to a conqueror. The old man looked round, and answered with a great deal of spirit, "'Tis true I have got one accidental fall, but I would willingly see any man amongst you, who could give me a second." When these matches were over, the stadium was left clear for the boxers. They were armed for this rude encounter with the *cæstus*, a leathern gauntlet, which folds round the fingers and upper part of the hand, and is fastened at the wrist, and strengthened on the outside with plates of iron or lead. I must own, though the agility and suppleness of the wrestlers, and their various artifices to give or avoid a fall, afforded me some pleasure, I could not behold without a secret horror the rough blows, which the boxers so unmercifully dealt on each other. It is no uncommon thing at these matches to see a contusion raised in the face, an eye struck out, or a jaw-bone cracked, by the tremendous blows of the *cæstus*. ANDROLICHRUS, one of the boxers, appeared like an object who intended to excite the charity rather than the applauses of the

assembly. He lost an eye at Pisa, his foreteeth at Nemea, had his nose flattened at Delphi, and was carried off for dead here. That thou mayest the better judge, how disagreeable the spectacle must be to one, in whom custom has not effaced the soft impressions of humanity, I will tell thee a remarkable incident, to which I was myself an eye-witness. Two boxers, CREUGAS and DAMOXENES, agreed, on the point of engaging, to give each other notice of every blow. The agreement was ill-kept; for DAMOXENES having bid his adversary lift up his hand, struck him on the side with such violence, that partly with the force of the blow, partly the sharpness of his nails, he pierced his belly, and tore out his entrails. CREUGAS expired on the spot. The crown was decreed him, though dead, and DAMOXENES was punished for his barbarity with perpetual banishment. The boxer who showed most skill, was THE-AGENES of Syracuse. He had acquired such a strength in his wrists, that merely by parrying the blows of his competitor, and holding him at arm's length, he obliged him, out of weariness, to resign the victory.

The Pancratiasts, Pentathloi, and the Throwers of the Discus, made their appearance on the third day. The performance of the first is a mixture of wrestling and boxing; it borrows from the one those violent contortions of the limbs and shakes of the body; from the other, the art of striking and avoiding a blow. It is one of the roughest and most dangerous exercises, of which we had an instance

instance in ARACHION of Sparta. That brave Pancratiast having received so violent a squeeze from his antagonist, that he was on the point of being strangled, had strength enough remaining to break the other's jaw, and obliged him to ask for mercy, though the victor himself expired the moment after. The Hellanodicae ordered ARACHION to be crowned, as he lay dead on the stadium. The expressions of joy and satisfaction in the assembly at the brave action of the Spartan are not to be described.

The Pentathloi are a particular set of combatants, who have acquired such a mastery at wrestling, boxing, throwing the discus, running, and casting the javelin, as to perform in each the same day. They make it a rule never to match a Pentathlos with another who has made one of these exercises alone his employment; as they suppose very reasonably, that a person who has divided his time between so many different occupations, cannot be equal to one who has applied his whole time to be perfect in a single exercise.

The discus is a huge mass of iron of a roundish shape, and polished surface. Those who throw it, lean the whole weight of their body upon one of their legs, which they step forwards; they whirl the discus round horizontally, and cast it from them with their utmost force. He who throws farthest, obtains the prize.

The fourth day was taken up with runners on foot, and the race-horses. The stadium for the former is composed of three parts: the

entrance, which is marked by a barrier of wood; the middle, which is a rising ground, where the crowns are placed in sight of their competitors; and the goal, which is distinguished by a large tree or post. There are two sorts of racers: those who run naked; and those who are armed with a light helmet, a target, and a sort of buskin. There are likewise three sorts of courses: the course of the stadium, which is only from the barrier to the goal; the diaulos, which is twice the length of the stadium; and the dolichus, which is much longer than either. DOLICHUS of Tarsus in Cilicia won the prize; and a poet has made an epigram, the turn of which is, that the "barrier and the goal are the only places where the young Cilician is seen; for no one can say, he was ever perceived in the middle of the course."

In the afternoon we removed to the hippodrome or horse-course, which was laid out by the architect CLEATAS, and is looked upon as one of the curiosities of Greece. That part of it called the barrier, where the horses and cars assemble before they enter the lists, by the disposition of the ground and buildings round it, resembles the prow of a ship. It grows narrower towards the end, and forms a kind of beak just at the place where it opens into the course. In the midst of the barrier is an altar; on the top stands a brazen eagle, which is made to raise itself, and extend its wings as a signal for the races to begin. On the sides are vaulted buildings, which serve for stands to the horses and chariots, till they

proceed to take their places as the lots determine them. The course itself is divided into two parts: a terrace, and a hill that rises gently from the plain. There are two goals: at the one is a statue of HIPPODAMIA holding a chaplet to crown PELOPS; at the other, an altar to the genius TARAXIPPUS. It is observed, that at this altar the horses take such a sudden fright, as frequently to overthrow their riders. The superstitious Greeks attribute it to a divine impulse, and therefore make vows to obtain the favor of TARAXIPPUS.

In the horse-races I particularly admired some expert riders, who, being upon the back of one horse, and leading a second, would leap from one to the other with surprising agility. Nor is the address of a mare belonging to PHIDOLAS of Corinth to be left unmentioned. Though her master fell off in the beginning of the race, she continued her course in the same manner as if he had kept his seat, turned round the goal, redoubled her vigor at the sound of the trumpet, and came in the first. The Hellanodicæ ordered PHIDOLAS to be crowned, who has obtained permission from the Eleans to erect a statue to the memory of his mare Aura.

The fifth and last day was taken up in the chariot-courses, which I thought were much the finest part of the sight. The splendor of the equipages, as they were drawn out in a long line before the lists, the neighing of the horses, the cries of the charioteers, and the applauses of the vast concourse of spectators,

formed a very cheerful and agreeable entertainment. Each chariot was drawn by four horses all in front; the two best are always outermost. The chariot-race was as usual full of a great many incidents. The car of ADMETUS the Corinthian broke down in turning round the goal, and two others, which followed behind, ran foul upon it, and overturned their drivers. My friend PHILOCLES's horses, which were very mettlesome, flew out so furiously at the altar of TARAXIPPUS, that with the violence of the shock he had nearly lost his seat. He kept it with some difficulty; but a chariot of ALCIBIADES had an opportunity to pass by him, and obtain the second prize. That young Athenian, who had no less than seven chariots which entered the lists, won the first, second, and fourth prizes. PHILOCLES came in for the third.

On the evening of the day on which this solemnity ended, the Hellenodicæ made a supper, according to custom, in the Prytaneum of Olympia, for the victors at the different exercises.

ALCIBIADES entertained the whole assembly the next day, in a manner answerable to the magnificence wherein he had appeared at the games. EMPEDOCLES of Agrigentum gave us the most extraordinary regale. As he is a Pythagorean, both fish and flesh are absolutely forbidden by the doctrines of his sect; and therefore he had an ox made of paste, composed of myrrh, frankincense, and spices,

which he distributed by pieces to all who presented themselves.

The different dispositions of my five companions have rendered the pleasure arising from the company and diversions of Olympia peculiar to each. The pious and humane PHILEMON renews those long-contracted friendships, which war claims a right of interrupting for a time; and is never more happy, than in trying to infuse sentiments of peace, and a friendly disposition towards Athens, in his Spartan and Corinthian acquaintance. CLINIAS has complained to me with some concern, that the learned performances repeated here, do not equal those he remembers formerly, when PINDAR charmed the ears of Greece by his odes, and HERODOTUS excited their attention to his history. The polite CHLORUS boasts, that he was the first man who congratulated ALCIBIADES upon gaining three prizes at the chariot-course, and was in return, the first of the assembly invited to supper the next evening by that magnificent Athenian. HIPPIAS is not so far lost to his business as a merchant, amidst the pleasures of the place, but he has found time to drive several advantageous bargains. As to PHILOCLES, he thinks himself arrived at the highest pitch of happiness and glory to which a mortal can attain. For the Greeks, potent lord, hold their countrymen who conquer at these games in no small degree of esteem; they are not only maintained at the public charge for the rest of their lives, but

exempted from the burden of taxes and civil employments.

Thou wilt, I believe, agree with me in concluding, that though such exercises as give a graceful appearance to the body, and form it for military service, should be cultivated in all wise states; yet those ought to be discountenanced, which tend only to breed up a set of idle persons, who, by making the art of maiming the limbs of their fellow-creatures their only employment, are in effect rendered fit for nothing else. However, one cannot help admiring that passionate love of glory, which urges on the Greeks to contend so earnestly for the crown of olive. It brings to my mind a generous saying of TIGRANES the Mede: being informed that the formidable invasion of XERXES had not interrupted the Olympic games, and told at the same time in what the reward consisted, he cried out in raptures even in the presence of his sovereign, "Heavens, MARDONIUS, against what men are we come to fight, who do not make wealth the object of their contention, but fame?" Adieu.

From Olympia.

P.

LETTER LXXIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Olympia.*

THE Mitylenian ambassadors had a few days ago a public audience of the Peloponnesian allies in the temple of JUPITER OLYMPIUS. The chief of the embassy laid before them, in a long and artful harangue, the reasons which had induced his state to renounce their dependance upon Athens. He began with desiring the assembly not to be prejudiced against his state; because, after continuing so many years in a firm alliance with the Athenians, during the time of their prosperity, they now deserted them in that of their distress. But, he said, as the true motive of the treaty which they had made with the Athenians, was not to assist them in subduing the rest of the Greeks, but to join in the common cause against the Barbarians; so when once the ambitious views of Athens made her usurp an unreasonable superiority over her neighbours, those ties were naturally dissolved. That the favors which Athens had bestowed upon them, and the lenity with which they had been treated, though they carried a fair appearance, were intended to keep the Lesbians from stirring, whilst that aspiring republic was insensibly enslaving the rest of her allies. That therefore no charge of ingratitude to benefactors could lie

against his countrymen, who were only preventing, by a timely precaution, those dangers which surrounded them. He next represented the advantages which the Peloponnesians would gain by receiving them into their alliance; that besides strengthening their fleet with a large squadron, they would have an opportunity, by the convenient situation of Lesbos, to intercept those supplies, which enabled Athens to continue the war. He set forth in exaggerated colors the weak condition of the latter, exhausted by the plague, the expenses of their preparations, and the losses they had sustained; and concluded with solemnly entreating them, in the name of Olympian JUPITER, in whose temple they were assembled, not to abandon a people, who were the first that had recourse to their protection, but to show they deserved the glorious title which they assumed, of protectors of the distressed, and deliverers of Greece. The assembly, with whom this speech had no small weight, after a short deliberation returned a favorable answer, and unanimously decreed, that the Lesbians should be comprehended in the Peloponnesian league. Deputies from the united states have held several conferences in the Prytaneum of Olympia, to debate on the present posture of their affairs. PHILEMON, who watches narrowly over all their designs, has dispatched a courier to Athens with what intelligence he has been able to procure. He suspects that they intend to form a general rendezvous at Corinth, and to attack Athens both by sea and land. It is certain,

that orders have been issued out for providing immediately a large number of machines for transporting ships over land. The allies are now in the midst of their harvest; and it will occasion some delays to take the people from their work, which will give the Athenians time to prepare a force sufficient to oppose the attempts of their enemies. This sudden turn of affairs, and the vigorous resolutions of the allies, determine the company I came with, to set out early to-morrow on their return to Athens. The news I received from HYDASPES, that the Persian court intended to send a private agent to Sparta, afforded me no small pleasure. The ministry, from overlooking both sides of the game in a conjuncture very interesting to Persia, cannot fail of directing their councils on the surest grounds, particularly when so important a commission is intrusted to one of CRATIPPUS's abilities. Noble satrap, I kiss thy robe, and bid thee farewell.

The first of the month Metagitnion.

Extract of a Letter from Athens.

Dispatches from CLIPPIDES were yesterday read in the assembly of the people. He gives an account in them, that the whole island, except Methymna had declared in favor of the Mitylenians; that the reinforcements he had received from thence, and our allies, enabled him to form two camps against the city, one on the north, the other on the south side,

and to block up their ports so entirely, that no succours could arrive by sea. The besieged made a vigorous sally, but were repulsed. Some ambassadors from Thebes and Sparta (he adds) had found means to get into the town, and encouraged the inhabitants to hold out with the hopes of a speedy relief.

P.

LETTER LXXIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

THY letters to HYDASPES on the Olympic games, and thy remarks on the general appearance of the country, as thou hast found it on thy way to that celebrated solemnity, were highly entertaining to him, MEGABYZUS, and myself. For thou hast discovered in them a knowledge of the antiquities of Greece, superior to what one might reasonably expect from thy stay in it, and an elegance of taste which nature alone could give thee. The Great King was so particularly entertained with the copies which he saw of them, that he has deposited them for his own perusal in the royal cabinet. He was pleased to tell me, "they opened a new scene to him; that he had journeyed in fancy, like a quiet and inoffensive traveller, over a considerable part of those territories, where his great father had formerly carried ruin and desolation." Two of the Median lords,

whom SACAS accused upon the rack, were conducted to Babylon by a detachment of Doryphori, under the command of ARASPES. They underwent an examination of three hours in MEGABYZUS's apartment; but it was with difficulty we were able to extort any thing from them, and the testimonials they gave of their behaviour have almost convinced some of the supreme council, that no material reproach can be fixed upon their characters. I confess to thee, I am rather willing to suspend my sentiments, till the common accidents of time, and suggestions of prudence, have enabled us to see further into this dark and intricate affair. It is hard to imagine, that a wretch, who died in torments, would lay the charge of such bloody purposes to other than his real accomplices; and I think the honor of a satrap is a point so tender, that it ought to be free, not only from the imputation, but even the remotest suspicion of guilt. I took the liberty to urge this once at a meeting of the ministers, when I perceived many satraps were of a different opinion. For my own part, I have made the most accurate inquiries over the province of Media, by means of several expert emissaries, whom I sent thither; nor do I find among the inhabitants the least inclination to revolt. What confirms me in it is, that the king has not long since received a very loyal and dutiful address from the people of that country, presented to him by the hands of their principal nobles, in which they express their sense of his paternal care for the welfare of the Persian

9

empire; and congratulate him on the discovery of the execrable treacheries of SACAS, beseeching OROMASDES to spread his guardian wing over the mighty ARTAXERXES, the peculiar favorite of Heaven, and the favorite of every nation whom the radiant MITHRAS surveys in his diurnal course. A few days ago I had intelligence that OXYATHRES is retired into Scythia. I am afraid he is far engaged in the eunuch's conspiracy, and is fled, from a consciousness of his criminal transactions. ARTÆUS insinuated to me, when advice arrived of his departure, that it was probable, as that lord was descended from PHRAORTES, he might be the person designed in the passage transcribed by thee from one of SACAS's letters to PERICLES.

GRATIPPUS has orders to set out for Lacedæmon as soon as the campaign is over in Greece. I have given him particular instructions to examine, in the best manner that he can, what information the people of that city receive from their new envoy residing at this court, NICANDER. The conferences which pass between him and me are whimsical enough; for while I am endeavouring to find out what length his commission will suffer him to go with us, and what is the meaning of his embassy, he is studious to answer me in such a way, as that, after the conversation is over, the result of it shall amount to nothing. Thou knowest I am obliged by my office to recollect the substance of all interviews with foreign ministers, in order to deliver them in a speech at the council-table; and to be plain with you,

this NICANDER scarce gives me matter for a speech. In that case I can only tell the satraps of the cabinet, how much I attempted to say; and how little he was pleased to reply; so that the most considerable part in the dialogue falls wholly to my share.

The last time I talked with him, I exerted myself greatly before him, and drew him out, by the mere violence of words, into some warmth. As he is of a turn somewhat singular, I fancy thou wilt be entertained with a few traits of his manner in conversing. He acquainted me, "that he is commanded by the
" Spartans to require a fleet of an hundred sail,
" with twenty thousand land forces, from our
" monarch; in return for which extraordinary
" assistance, they offer their friendship, and a
" promise to aid us with troops against any
" rebellion in Ægypt, or commotion in the
" provinces." I told him, "that my royal
" master expects from the republic of Sparta,
" terms of a more important nature, if he
" vouchsafes to enter into a league with them:
" that NICANDER could not but be sensible there
" are two articles in the treaty called CIMON'S
" peace, which the Persians are desirous of
" seeing annulled: and therefore we must insist,
" that the Lacedæmonians shall never be re-
" conciled to Athens, unless we are allowed
" free navigation on the Grecian seas, and
" our monarch be put in full possession of the
" colonies in Asia." He answered, "As the
" Athenians were framers of that treaty, he
" thought they were responsible for the articles

“ in it ; and hoped so unseasonable a demand
“ would not be a means of obstructing the
“ alliance which he offered between ARTA-
“ XERXES and his native city : ” adding , “ that
“ the empire of Persia was like an unwieldy
“ body , which , whenever it sickened , might
“ possibly want relief from the influence of
“ Lacedæmon . ” I again repeated what I said ,
and he determined to send a courier for fresh
instructions immediately to Sparta . I then
asked him the reason , “ Why the Pelopon-
“ nesians , and particularly his own coun-
“ trymen , who boast of their great armies and
“ extensive power , have as yet contented
“ themselves in the management of their cam-
“ paigns in Greece , with only ravaging the
“ barren soil of Attica ? It seems to me (con-
“ tinued I) as if you made the business of war
“ nothing more than mock-skirmish and amuse-
“ ment . ” “ With us (answered he) war is
“ rest from our labors at home . ” “ But (said
“ I) how comes it wisdom has so damped your
“ valor , as that you will not dare to march
“ up to the walls of Athens ? Methinks , if I
“ know the Spartans , they would willingly
“ exercise their courage in reality . Can such
“ a people as this pretend to cope with the
“ numerous nations of the East ? ” “ Yes (re-
“ plied he) Thermopylæ can prove it . ” “ And
“ what did Thermopylæ prove , (returned I ,)
“ but the temerity of your leader ? However ,
“ to be serious with you , I believe you may
“ have some political reasons for not hazarding
“ an attack upon Athens . You will forgive me

“ therefore, if I have pursued my raillery too
“ far, and I withdraw my objection with
“ respect to the conduct of your fellow-citizens.”
“ How? (answered NICANDER with some eager-
“ ness;) but if the objection does not withdraw
“ itself, I am in no wise desirous to be so far
“ obliged to you: excuse me, if I am beholden
“ to no one for the withdrawing of an objec-
“ tion, when I am endeavouring to maintain
“ an argument which may be supported by
“ reason.” I smiled at his impatience, and
he informed me afterwards, that Athens itself
was a strong place, and in distressing her allies
and tributary towns, she was sufficiently weak-
ened by the Peloponnesian army. We then
turned the conversation to some other topics,
which indeed brought him again into good-
humor, but whereon he spoke with a dis-
agreeable brevity and reserve. Upon the
whole, CLEANDER, I foresee we shall make
no advantage of these embassies from the stiff
republic of Lacedæmon. Wouldst thou know
my opinion of the Spartans? It is this; they
are a proud and severe people. Let them thank
LYCURGUS, who has made them so! Unlike
the rest of the admired sages, who have given
salutary laws to the world; instead of enlarg-
ing the minds of an ignorant race, he has more
effectually contracted them. Instead of teaching
them a little condescension to others, they
have learned only to set a value upon them-
selves. Instead of polishing them into an ease
and benevolence of temper, he has reformed
them out of it. And for the sake of avoiding

the refinements of luxury, he has introduced a neglect of that humanity in the lesser offices of life, which adds such a relish to the enjoyment of it.

C.

LETTER LXXV.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. *From Heliopolis.*

IN a former letter from Thebes⁹⁵, CLEANDER, I took notice to thee of the extravagant veneration paid by the Ægyptians to several of their home-bred animals, which must appear at first sight exceedingly absurd and ridiculous. It was my opinion, that the application of them, in their hieroglyphic imagery, to express the nature and attributes of their gods, had acquired to them this extraordinary degree of sacredness; and to palliate this superstition, the priests insinuate, that the worship ascribed to animals is purely relative, and ultimately directed to the divinities, of whom they are the symbols. Now as many of their gods were probably men deified, I am led to think, that there, is a reference in these symbols, as well to the qualities, actions, and remarkable endowments of those illustrious persons, as to the nature and qualities of those fideral divinities, under which they were afterwards worshipped.

⁹⁵ Letter xxxii.

worshipped. A black ox, for example, the animal sacred to the sun, is the symbol of OSIRIS, because OSIRIS, say the priests, is the sun, and the moon ISIS: but as those deities, during their reign in Ægypt, were the first who introduced agriculture, so on that account likewise the ox and cow might become their symbols. And for this cause, they tell you, the soul of OSIRIS after his death retired into that animal, and chose to dwell there rather than any where else; because the ox was the symbol of agriculture. Hence the ox Mnevis or Menes, which is consecrated to the sun, came to be held in such veneration, and worshipped here for a god, as the apis is at Memphis. And this reminds me of another reason alledged for the worship of the sacred animals, though indeed a very fabulous one, taken from the mythological history of Ægypt; that the gods having been once pursued by TYPHON, concealed themselves under the figures of different animals, which may perhaps mean no more, than that the celestial gods come down sometimes to dwell in those symbols which represent them. And without some such interpretation their mythology concerning OSIRIS is strangely confused and inexplicable, which makes him to be the sun, and supposes that while his soul informs the body of an ox, it still resides in that luminary. Near akin to this is their doctrine of transmigration, which may be another cause of their paying regard to animals. For the Ægyptians say, they were the first who maintained that the soul of man

was immortal, and that after death it passed successively into the bodies of animals, terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial; whence it returns to animate the body of a man, and finishes this circuit in three thousand years. There is through the different parts of Ægypt so great diversity in their modes of worship, that upon a slight examination one might be induced to think they differed entirely about their deities; and that there was no one general scheme of religion in which they all agreed. And indeed their mythology, whatever it be in itself, seems very perplexed and intricate to one who is left to collect it from external ceremonies, popular customs, and the dark hints which their priests, like oracles, at times deliver with great reserve and mysteriousness. Yet I am of opinion they do not so much dissent with regard to the deities themselves, as to the symbols, under which they would represent their natures and attributes. For first, I am certain that Isis and OSIRIS are every where adored, though they are differently represented and the modes of their worship vary in different places. Neither do I think it improbable, but that the goat at Mendes receives divine honors on the same account that the ox does here and at Memphis. When the Mendesian goat is dead, there is the same mourning throughout the whole nome, as they observe upon the drowning of their sacred ox at Memphis. The Mnevis, Apis, and Mendesian goat are held more sacred than all the other animals of Ægypt, as if they had the influence of the god more immediately

residing in them. The former two the priests expressly declare to have in them the soul of OSIRIS, as they pretend the latter to be the god PAN. But as there are two oxen equally sacred in their respective places, it seems difficult to understand how the soul of OSIRIS should have passed into both at once. But this I take to have been the case; when they deified their hero MENES, who is called OSIRIS, they consecrated him into a sidereal divinity, implying either, that his spirit passed into the sun, or that the soul of that luminary had resided in OSIRIS. The great lights of heaven were doubtless the most obvious of all visible objects to fill the minds of men with a religious reverence. And by thus grafting the worship of their deified heroes upon the mythology of the celestial bodies, they found the likeliest method to divert the attention of such as were their nearest contemporaries from all those circumstances in their lives, by which they might remember those gods to have been men like themselves. But in order to secure a more particular respect in succeeding ages to the person himself, who was consecrated as a god, and lest the honor intended him might be swallowed up in the worship of an original deity, I suppose those rites and mysteries were invented, which bear a particular allusion to the great events of his life, or that remarkable catastrophe which put an end to it. And being received into the number of the gods, it was necessary he should be remembered by the particular relation he bore to Egypt. Thus I

suppose the hierophants introduced the worship of the sacred ox as the god OSIRIS, led to it by the hieroglyphic imagery and their doctrine of transmigration; and tempered their imposture to the genius of the vulgar, who are most taken with the grossest representations. OSIRIS having reigned over all Ægypt, and after his death being remembered as a tutelar deity, in which the whole country had an equal interest, it is not to be wondered, if upon the division of the kingdoms the chief city, both of the Upper and Lower Ægypt, should claim his presence among them. And it being established opinion, that without the living image of their god, the worship of it could not be rightly solemnized, they both, while divided in their interests, forming also a schism in their religion, sought out for themselves their own sacred ox; and so the soul of OSIRIS has ever since continued to inform two different animals, though the priests of the two cities are since become more united in their interests. But the vulgar, blinded with superstition, examine not into these things; and the priests treat this matter with their usual sophistry and collusion; though when hardly pressed by men of reason and inquiry, they seem rather to maintain, that the god OSIRIS manifests himself in the sacred ox, than that the sacred ox is itself the god OSIRIS.

This worship of OSIRIS I may call the popular religion of Ægypt. What more recondite doctrines are concealed under the mysteries of Isis, I am not concerned in the present subject

to inquire. Neither will I enter into a perplexed detail of their original deities, who are said to have reigned in Ægypt. For the reign of those deities I take to mean the mundane revolution, which I spoke of in a former letter ⁹⁶; and it is remarkable that the time which they ascribe to the reign of all their gods, amounts exactly to the same period of thirty-six thousand five hundred and twenty-five years. The reign therefore of the gods I conceive to imply, that the sun, moon, and stars run their courses thousands of years before man was upon the earth. The names of those deities they confound with their demi-gods and heroes. I have been sometimes of opinion, that by VULCAN they mean an eternal deity, for they commonly speak of his reign as unlimited; but his worship is not universal throughout Ægypt. Their theology, in short, (as I have hinted elsewhere,) may be resolved into a system of the world, and their ISIS and OSIRIS, though generally taken for the sun and moon, which are supposed to contribute to the generation of all things, have moreover been acknowledged as deities through every part of nature, and consecrated over and over into different stars and elements, as new discoveries came to be made in the heavens, or any where else through the system of nature. About the same time that the five intercalary days were added to their year, it is likely that the Ægyptian astronomers had observed the appearance of

⁹⁶ Letter xxv.

five new stars on their horizon, of which their predecessors had taken no notice. And upon this occasion they consecrated their Isis anew, with others of their deities, and supposed her to rise in the dog-star. ORUS, the son of Isis and OSIRIS, is generally made the last of the gods who reigned in Ægypt. Now OSIRIS is undeniably the first of their kings, to whom any of their histories reach up. And their other gods, if they are to be referred to real beings, besides the several operations and powers of nature, there is good reason to think, were OSIRIS's immediate progenitors or contemporaries. Such in general, CLEANDER, are the conjectures I have been able to form upon the Ægyptian mythology. Thou wilt consider it as a subject which a very subtle body of men have made it their study to perplex and render intricate. By the figure of a Sphinx in the avenues of their temples, they seem designedly to imply, that the doctrine of their gods is obscure and enigmatical. Adieu.

L.

LETTER LXXVI.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

THOU mayest think it extraordinary, after all I have heard of the wisdom of the Areopagus, that I never attended in any cause before that council till yesterday. And the cause was indeed such a one, that I should have been curious to have heard the debate of it in a court, however low in reputation; much more before persons of the highest, for the good sense and integrity of their judgments.

In the last great feast of BACCHUS, the solemnity of which draws a prodigious resort of strangers from all parts of Greece, ARISTOPHANES presented a play, entitled THE BABYLONIANS, wherein CLEON was reflected upon in a manner that greatly incensed him. He was the more offended at it, as it is the first performance in which he has been publicly ridiculed; and having been courted and admired, when he appeared at the head of an opposition to PERICLES, he is exceedingly impatient of any satire, which tends to hurt his popularity. As the comedy had been received with much applause, he determined it should be condemned upon legal reasons, though it stood the test of a critical examination. Accordingly he delivered in an account of the offence to the Areopagus, and accused

the poet, as "guilty of defamation" 97, and "one who exposed the citizens and the state to the derision of foreigners." Towards the dusk of the evening, the judges were seated in the open air upon MARS's hill. The plaintiff and defendant were placed on the stools of Injury and Innocence. CLEON opened with great spirit and impetuosity; and, notwithstanding the disgust which the people in general expressed at this attempt to deter the comic writers from that licentious buffoonery which entertains and flatters them, he showed himself superior to such murmurs, however affected by the stings of wit. He said, "that he pretended to no rhetoric; nor would it be proper, or even lawful, to exert it before this judicature, if he excelled at all in it: but that there was a natural eloquence accompanying the complaints of the injured, which, if it betrayed him into warm expressions, might more easily be excused than controuled. He understood, from the laws of SOLON, that the republic had a tenderness for the reputation of private men, and allowed an action of slander; a still greater for that of magistrates, in whose character its own dignity and welfare are concerned; that it was necessary their character should be guarded by the severest laws in a democracy, because they are so very limited in the exercise of

97 Quo nomine dicam illi scripsit [sc. CLEON ARISTOPHANI] ea autem erat ἀδικίας εἰς τὰς Πολίτας. PETIT. in leg. Att. p. 79.

“ power. To supply the defects of power, their
“ authority (which arises from reputation)
“ must of course be steadily supported. That
“ it mattered not how far the facts alluded to
“ in THE BABYLONIANS were true; it was to
“ be considered, whether the allusions carried
“ an illegal reproach. That it became them
“ to understand the passages which gave them
“ offence, in the same manner they were un-
“ derstood in full theatre; that the task of
“ scandal would be very easy, if these pitiful
“ tools of it were given to know, that their
“ pieces are to be taken in one sense by the
“ audience, and in another by a court of jus-
“ tice. This would be giving a sanction to
“ evasions, by which the effect of the laws
“ may be either destroyed or diminished. That
“ he was extremely unwilling to find fault
“ with any diversions which engaged the atten-
“ tion of Greece, and raised the glory of
“ Athens; but he considered the contempt
“ thrown on himself, the magistrates, and the
“ public measures, to be much worse in the
“ festivals, when there was so general a con-
“ course, than in such as were attended mere-
“ ly by their own citizens. That it became
“ every man who loved his country, to draw
“ a veil over its weakness, its pusillanimity,
“ or rashness, and not to expose before all
“ Greece, in a fit of laughter, what they should
“ wish to hide even from themselves. He
“ concluded with hoping, that those ma-
“ gistrates would protect the commonwealth
“ from the impudent licence of comedy, wha

“are expressly forbidden by the laws to write
“a performance of that nature.”

When CLEON had done, ARISTOPHANES was called upon to offer something in his own defence. I thought the assurance of the man would not have deserted him in any circumstances; but the occasion was too trying, and the place too solemn. He seemed much confounded, and his adversary called out to him, “that he must not think of imposing upon this
“tribunal by his theatrical pleasantries;” which disturbed him more. However, he recovered himself so far as to speak to the following effect: “That as the prosecution, carried on
“by CLEON in this court, was singular and
“new, though grounded on a law which had
“been long in force, he hoped the judges
“would consider well the consequence of it,
“before they gave a determination. That no
“man knows what he does, when he makes a
“precedent; and if, by censuring him upon
“the complaint before them, they should go
“contrary to the opinion of the excellent judges,
“who had reviewed and allowed his comedy,
“contrary to the avowed practice of the state,
“the poets would be uncertain, how far they
“were secure upon the strength of the de-
“cisions made by those judges, the public
“festivals would be deprived of a very con-
“siderable ornament, and the vicious be equally
“safe, with the virtuous from that ridicule,
“which had been found instrumental to good
“manners. That it was particularly the business
“of this court to watch the morals of the

" people; but as they acted by certain rules,
 " and could only lay open offences actually
 " committed within the letter or intention of
 " the law, there were several very blamable
 " parts of conduct, both above and below their
 " cognizance: that these equally belonged to
 " the province of comedy; and where the
 " sword of the magistrate could either not
 " reach, or not be suitably applied, he ap-
 " prehended the poet to be useful. That he
 " hoped the wisdom of that council would
 " protect such, as were carrying on by effi-
 " cacious, and, he conceived, legal means,
 " the ends of their institution. That this way
 " of reforming was wonderfully agreeable to
 " the people, and the nature of the govern-
 " ment: that he feared more danger from the
 " increase of those disorders, which the free-
 " dom of his pen had censured, than from
 " the opinion the Greeks might entertain of
 " the state, by attending to the force of those
 " censures: that to be the first in discovering
 " and acknowledging one's faults, is an argu-
 " ment of understanding, as to be the last in
 " these important points, is an argument of
 " exceeding folly: but it was not strange that
 " those should counsel others to hide their
 " errors from themselves, who were so uneasy
 " when their own are reproved. That he was
 " extremely sorry to have a contest with one,
 " who, in the time of PERICLES, was, of all
 " the Athenians that honored his pieces with
 " their presence, the most applauding spectator."

I found the inclinations of the people, who attended these pleadings, not at all disposed to favor CLEON; and the stroke with which ARISTOPHANES concluded, gave so much pleasure, that it would have raised a general laugh against him, were not that directly forbidden by the rules of the court. The complaint was ordered to be reserved for another hearing, and no judgment pronounced. It is thought, the affair will be dropped, and CLEON satisfied with terrifying ARISTOPHANES, and revenging himself by the severity of his oration. The comic poet swears by THALIA, the muse of his art; that he will not spare the currier in the next representation at the lesser feast of BACCHUS.

HYDASPES, thou hast no notion of the satirical species of wit so much admired in this country; and it is a greater commendation to say, thou wantest it, than that thou hast the rest at thy command. It is admired, because it flatters the vanity of every private man to be entertained at the expense of his neighbours; and especially, because it flatters the licence of a popular government to be entertained at the expense of its leaders. Little minds are fond of placing themselves on a level with the great; for it they fall very much below those qualities which adorn them, they are perhaps superior to the foibles which debase them. If this reflection on the weakness of great men, by proving that they are but men, could engage us to aspire to an imitation of their excellencies, it were indeed a very useful consequence; but I am afraid it makes us true to our own failings,

and inclines us to pursue comparative, not real goodness. Let me add, that as in considering the portion of happiness assigned us, we are apt to look upwards, and repine, if others have apparently more; so in considering our moral perfection, we are apt to look downwards, and are satisfied, if others have apparently less; whereas, in both cases, the reverse is the right conduct. And were it followed, we should endeavour to copy the best models, instead of being contented to avoid the worst. For this reason it would be far better, if, as in the earliest times, wit were exercised in the panegyrics of Gods and heroes, to invite us to moral actions, by representing the most perfect pattern, and not in satire, which delights only in pictures of deformity. There would be less too of the disgust and melancholy, which speculations on the dark side of human nature occasion in the generality; above all, in the morosely virtuous, who form ideas of its corruptions worse than its most depraved condition will justify, or the very being of society admit. In a word, the virtue of every man would then be adjusted according to the exemplar given us in the characters of heroes, and the natural constitution of things, not measured by the failings of those about him; and the world might be restored to its own good opinion, as well as to the favor of OROMASDES.

C.

LETTER LXXVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. *From Athens.*

THOU wilt not be surpris'd, that my correspondence with Persia hath been interrupted since my departure from Olympia, when I tell thee the occasion of it. The morning after my arrival at Athens, a decree pass'd the assembly of the people, that, in the present exigence of affairs, all the citizens, except the second order call'd Hippeis, (who only serve on horseback,) as well as the strangers residing at Athens, should repair, without delay, on board the fleet. Though I had scarcely recovered the fatigue of the journey, and was sensible that the accidents of the sea, and the uncertainty of finding a conveyance for my letters, would be a hinderance to the duties of my employment for some months, yet I considered at the same time, that an unwillingness to go would either raise a suspicion of my real character, or betray a coolness in my affection to the state. Within a few days I prepared my military equipage, and complied with a very obliging offer of PHILOCLES, to serve as a volunteer on board the quadrireme, which he commanded. When the fleet, consisting of a hundred gallies, of which PHORMIO was admiral, had received sailing orders, and the wind sat fair to carry them out of the Piræus, almost the whole city assembled on

the shore to see the ceremonies practised on such occasions, and take the last leave of their friends and relations, who were repairing to their respective ships. First, silence was proclaimed by sound of trumpet; the public herald repeated a solemn form of words, which contained vows to the gods for the success of the Athenian arms. When that was ended, the admiral and trierarchs of the fleet appeared on deck; and after they had poured a libation to NEPTUNE, drank in golden cups to the fortune of the voyage. Whilst a Pæan was singing, the whole fleet ranged themselves in line of battle, struck their oars, and made the best of their way out of the harbour, amidst the acclamations of that vast concourse of spectators. We proceeded for the coast of Peloponnesus; and after waiting in vain for the enemy's fleet to come out, made descents in several parts, and ravaged the country. We were informed by some prisoners, that the allies had drawn together a small body of troops at Corinth, being much disappointed by the uneasiness which several of their cities expressed at the continuance of the war, and dispirited by the extraordinary armament which the Athenians had fitted out in so short a time. As an attempt to demolish the Corinthian fleet in port was looked upon as too hazardous, we contented ourselves in showing the superiority of our strength in the eyes of all Greece; and on hearing the allies were retired into winter-quarters, received orders to return. The expenses of this year's campaign, though it has

been unactive, have proved very burdensome to the Athenians. Besides the fleet which cruised about Peloponnesus, they had another of the same force to guard their own coasts; and have lately sent a reinforcement of 50 ships to CLIPPIDES, under the command of PACHES, with a supply of 200 talents. They are in great hopes, that Mitylene will be obliged to surrender before the beginning of next summer, as it is now blocked up both by land and sea.

The resolute and brave action of two hundred and twenty Plateans, is at present the general subject of conversation here. The scarcity of provision within the town, and the difficulty of throwing in relief from without, inspired a party of the garrison with the bold design of escaping through the lines. They began with computing the height of the wall of circumvallation, by exactly reckoning the number of the rows of bricks that composed it. They next took advantage of a dark tempestuous night, and sallied out of the town under the guidance of THÆNETUS an augur, and EUPOLPIDAS an officer, marching at some distance from each other, to prevent the clashing of their armour. They applied the ladders to the intervals between the towers, two of which were immediately seized, and the centinels killed. A loose tile that fell from the wall, gave an alarm to the Peloponnesian camp; but as the besieged made a feint sally on the other side, and the darkness of night and the storm, which beat full in their faces, helped to increase the confusion, they durst not leave their

their posts. In the mean time the select number, that had made themselves masters of the towers, secured the passage for the rest of their company, who, when they had mounted the first wall, changed the ladders, and came down on the other side, where they drew themselves up to defend the detachment that were preparing to quit the towers. Whilst these last were descending, a body of reserve belonging to the besiegers came up with lights, and the whole Platean party had just time to make their escape. They retired by the way that lies towards Thebes, in order to deceive the Peloponnesians, who sent out detachments in pursuit of them on the road leading to Athens. When they were returned to the camp, the Plateans changed their course, and arrived safely here. I have procured from one of them a plan of the fortifications of the city, and the works of the besiegers, which I send enclosed in this packet, together with a journal of the expedition to the coasts of Peloponnesus drawn up by PHILOCLES.

The advantages which the Athenians have received from a war now advanced to the conclusion of its fourth year, are so trifling, in comparison of the ambitious projects which they formed to themselves at the beginning of it, and the insupportable burden of their annual expenses, that several of the most intelligent and disinterested citizens begin to think seriously of proposing terms for an honorable accommodation. But the party that desire the continuance of the quarrel, have

a great influence over the minds of the ignorant multitude, and flatter them with hopes of assistance from several foreign princes, as **PERDICCAS** king of Macedon, **SITALCES**, and our potent monarch. The head of this faction, **CLEON**, has lately received a disgrace, under which nothing but his matchless assurance could support him. He had taken a bribe of five talents from some tributary islands, to obtain for them a diminution of the taxes which they pay to this state. The bargain by some means or another got air, and the **Hippeis** (or knights) brought a charge of corruption against him, in the name of their order, before the **Areopagus**. The accusation was clearly made out, and he was obliged to refund the talents. **LAMACHUS**, a young man, is lately elected one of the ten generals by **CLEON**'s interest, who carried his point in so high a manner, that it gave singular offence. The opposite party have engaged **ARISTOPHANES**, the comic poet, to write a play, which is intended to prepare the minds of the people for overtures of peace, by setting forth the detriment that the war occasions to the common interest of Greece, the miseries it has brought upon Athens, and the views of their orators and generals, who desire to prolong it. Neither the memory of **PERICLES**, nor the characters of the present administration, will be spared in the piece, which is to be performed at the next feasts of **BACCHUS**.

I cannot pretend to determine, whether the representation of this comedy will have

that effect upon the minds of the people, which some expect from it. It has been long observed of the Athenians, that though they see even with pleasure their greatest ministers accused upon the stage of the grossest enormities, and vilified with the severest satire, and permit the fables of their deities to be exposed with all the licentiousness of a scurrilous buffoon wit; yet neither is the management of their affairs taken from the former, nor a grain of incense less offered upon the altars of the latter. Farewel.

P.

LETTER LXXVIII.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

THERE is no part of my instructions, that I obey with so much private satisfaction, as that relating to my correspondence with thee. From hence I not only foresee the greatest advantage to our master's service, but I promise, myself the most valuable improvements from the communication of thy sagacity and experience, and perhaps, should I be found not unworthy, a friendship, which will be the honor of my future life.

When the council of the Great King, observing the new light that was thrown upon the affairs of Greece by every dispatch of thine from Athens, had determined to place an agent

also at Sparta, my patron GOBRYAS cast his eyes upon me for that employment. He considered, that the misfortunes of my family would be a proper recommendation of me here. We fell with the aristocracy, and were obliged to leave Rhodes, when the popular faction prevailed, and made an alliance with Athens. My two brothers have ever since taken up their residence on the opposite coast of Caria, waiting for some turn of affairs in our favor. And thou knowest, those of our principles throughout all Greece, place their only hope in the success of the Peloponnesian arms.

As soon as I arrived, I waited upon BRASIDAS, a young officer of reputation, and presented to him the token from my brother THERON his host. He received it very cordially, and expressed his satisfaction at this opportunity of returning the good offices done him, while the galley he commanded lay in the port of Caunus. I told him, that, driven from my own country, I had made the tour of Greece and Asia, and had even seen the court of the Great King; but that, tired with wandering, I was determined to fix at last in this seat of security and virtue, where valor and discipline repel all dangers from without, and an uniform obedience to the best laws prevents the more fatal evils from within. He replied with a smile, that a taste of Susa was by no means a preparation for a Spartan diet; but that he would obtain a licence from the Proxeni for my stay in the city, and would propose me for a member to the little society,

where he daily eat his frugal meal. I thanked him, and added, that I might perhaps not be altogether unworthy some favor from the state, as I was thoroughly informed of the condition of the Rhodian marine, a point my countrymen were so jealous of, and which might be a discovery of consequence in the present war.

The whole city is at present taken up with the funeral of ARCHIDAMUS. It is indeed a most solemn ceremony; as if this people intended, by so much respect paid to their dead princes, to make amends for the small share of regal pomp and authority they allow them when living. To his character thou art no stranger. He was the host of thy friend PERICLES. These two great men were suspected and traduced for measures, which the event proved to be wise and honest; and they most effectually distressed each other by those very counsels which were branded with the name of collusion and treachery. Yet still the memory of ARCHIDAMUS is pursued with reproaches; and a prudent and glorious administration of more than forty years, cannot make amends for his unwillingness to enter suddenly into a desperate war, and his forbearing a while to push the enemy in such a manner, as would render all terms of accommodation impossible. This furious spirit is kept up in the republic by the Ephore STHENELAIDAS; he, whose violent oration prevailed over all the king's reasons, and hurried the assembly into a vote, that

the treaties were broken on the part of Athens.

From the imperfect survey of things I have yet been able to take, I must not pretend to determine the question about this war, how far Sparta was interested in the quarrel of her Corinthian allies; or what credit she might give to the Athenians' offer of satisfaction. But of this I am convinced, it will ever be my duty to add fuel to this flame, and to attach myself to the party which declares against all overtures of peace. While their disputes continue, (which we should wish for in the first place,) the general force of Greece is daily growing weaker. And should even one of the powers prevail, and put an end to the war by the ruin of its rival, that very success would turn the thoughts of the conqueror upon tyrannizing over Europe; nor would he quit that near and tempting prospect, for the distant view of empty glory in the fields of Asia. Adieu.

From Sparta.

W.

LETTER LXXIX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

SINCE I read over the writings of the Grecian poets, noble friend, I have often thought it might be a very improving, as well as pleasing speculation, to inquire into the cause and origin of fables in the world; how the powers of nature and the human passions were first allegorized; and in what manner the plain facts of ancient history came to be mixed with the ornaments of a poetic imagination. After having made some search into the subject, at least so far as might enable me to converse upon it, I went one day into the Lyceum, and fell accidentally into discourse with CRESYPHON, a learned sophist. He told me, he should be very proud to instruct an inquisitive stranger in a point, which he himself had so thoroughly considered: but I must entreat you, said he, not to discover to any one those sentiments which I shall lay before you, lest some malicious person should accuse me of speaking against the gods of my country, and cite me to appear before the court of Areopagus. I assured him of my inviolable secrecy, and then he entered on the matter without further apology. You know, said he, that the Eastern parts of the world are thought to have been much sooner peopled than the climates of the West. The Greeks therefore lived for many

years in a state of ignorance and rudeness, while other regions enjoyed the ornaments as well as the conveniencies of life. Their diet was of the wild herbs of the field; their clothing of leaves; and the caverns, which were formed by the hand of nature in uncultivated mountains, were their places of habitation. The colonists, who mixed with them from Ægypt and Phœnicia, endeavoured to temper the savageness of the nation: and by communicating their customs to them, insensibly formed them to the politer arts of humanity. They taught them to strip the wool from the skins of animals, and to cure it for use. The knowledge of buildings and agriculture, when first revealed to them, was esteemed of so excellent and necessary a nature, that the gratitude which they owed to their benefactors, very naturally broke out into expressions of adoration. They regarded them as sent from heaven for the benefit of mortals, and adopted them after death among their deities. Hence arose the gods of the Greeks; and their ORPHEUS, APOLLO, and HERMES, (who is the same with the THOTH or MERCURY of Egypt,) take their rise from the laws and manners which they gave to a barbarous and rough race. And to say the truth, CLEANDER, such improvements as these might well demand the admiration of mankind in the dawnings of science, which are the principal supports of health and social felicity in more illuminated ages. Your account is certainly a very fair one, answered I, and what I shall readily acquiesce in. But methinks the

craft of these wise men concurred with the ignorance of these savages in the advancement of fable. For the first lawgivers and reformers of mankind, the better to claim respect from their countrymen and kindred, were ambitious to be thought descended from the gods, and to have had frequent interviews with them of singular importance. Yes, replied he, a divine mission strikes immediately with awe, and inclines us to implicit reverence and belief. The priests too were careful to contend with one another in raising altars to the memory of a new hero, and vamping up religious ceremonies to be performed in his honor. They busied themselves in writing whole volumes of fables; and he, who had the best invention, generally bore away the approbation of the multitude to his shrine, as well as the gainful applause of the more wealthy. Besides, before the use of letters and writing came amongst us, the remembrance of great and illustrious actions depended only on a sort of family or national tradition. Sometimes indeed they raised a monument with an uncouth representation engraven on it, of the thing which gave occasion to the erecting it; and perhaps now and then an irregular song was tuned to the praises of a celebrated conqueror. Undoubtedly, returned I, tradition is a fatal enemy to truth. One may suppose, for instance, that in order to imprint a story more effectually on the minds of children and strangers, a man zealous for the reputation of his ancestors might frequently intermix the marvellous with the probable;

and when he was warmed by discourse, might indulge himself in some flights of fancy, which he little thought contagious enough to infect the histories of after-times. Yet so it has proved, said the sophist; consider only the lying relations of travellers, and you will soon be brought to assert what you suppose. The fictions of these have passed, like the family traditions you speak of, for truth, and are adopted into our accounts of the early ages. At present, indeed, we are aware of such counterfeits, and though we hear out their tales with patience, we disdain to receive them with credulity. No man of sense converses now-a-days with one who has been a tedious voyage, without making some grains of allowance for the embellishments which such persons are too apt to give to their narration. To be serious, it is very difficult for one, who is sure of not being contradicted, to resist a strong inclination to tell wonders. Did not a traveller come back full fraught with extraordinary curiosities, his friends would laugh at him for pretending to have made the tour of foreign countries; and he would appear at once uninformed and ridiculous. Sensible, therefore, that he is permitted to enlarge and improve as he pleases, he thinks it becomes him to relate one story after another in such a manner, as each shall amaze you, without giving you a moment's pause to question him upon any. Should we commend the imagination of a poet or a painter, if they made no use of that general licence which is granted them, of inventing what they please, and

adorning those inventions with all the lively images of fancy? It is their office, you know, rather to amuse than instruct; and not content with forgiveness for endeavouring to deceive us, they demand applause for deceiving ingeniously. In this respect, CTESIPHON, (interrupted I,) you are in the right to be candid to the poets; but methinks no excuse is sufficient for the travellers. They have received indeed, as you intimate, a kind of licence for lying; but it is a privilege more allowed them from courtesy and prescription, than from the motives of reason and good sense. In my opinion, no quarter should be given to those, who, by forging strange things of the nations they have passed through, misrepresent one half of mankind to the other; and instead of eradicating the popular selfishness and little prejudices of their countrymen, serve only to confirm and increase them. Such as these may be said to sow the seeds of division among the inhabitants of the earth, and to banish the great principle of universal benevolence from the world. Let us return to the poets. To relate a fact with simplicity, is not so peculiarly their province, as to relate it with ornament. The poetic diction must necessarily be raised to distinguish it from the calmness of prose writings. A certain spirit of enthusiasm ought to diffuse a complexion of supernatural inspiration over their compositions, which would appear frantic in a plain commentary or annal. With them every shepherdess is a nymph or NAIAD; every

huntress a **DIANA** ; every beauty a **VENUS**. True, (answered he,) and the language of poetry would be nothing without it. How could we relish the *Iliad* or *Odyssæy* of our admired **HOMER**, without the divine machinery introduced there, and the mixture of those interesting fables which he has wove into his poems? Do you not think the invasion of Greece by **XERXES**, when he swept across the globe with millions in his train, a more wonderful story in every part of it, than the war of Troy would appear to us, when stripped of its poetical apparel? In a word, the impatient son of **PELEUS** is obliged to **HOMER** for his immortality; and the fame of that ancient siege is more owing to the warm imagination of the poet, than to any historical accounts that have been transmitted to us of it. None of these represent it in half so considerable a light. An historian would tell us simply, that **HECTOR** was a brave man: the poet informs us, he has **MARS** for his companion. Is **ULYSSES** shipwrecked? It is said, that **NEPTUNE** is angry with him; and the wisdom of the same hero is attributed to the inspiration of **MINERVA**. Thus the Greeks, in imitation of the Phœnicians and Ægyptians, have filled their history with mythology. The ground of the fable is real, while the ornaments are feigned; and the truth of antiquity is deformed by the ignorance of the people, the artifice of the priests, and the genius of the poets. Painters and sculptors have contributed not a little to support the credit of

fabulous stories; and a Satyr, or a Fawn, a Syren, or a Centaur, is often indebted for its spurious existence to an elegant statue or a fine painting. And here, added I, let us not forget the theatres of Athens. They are founded upon fiction, and subsist by the reception which it meets with. The poet feigns conversations and actions in the dramatic way. His plot is taken from some fable. It is set, as it were, in motion before our eyes; and if the representation is performed with plausibility, we almost begin to think the tale not impossible in reality. Beyond dispute (continued he) the stage may be called the kingdom of mythology. It reigns there protected by the superstition of the people, and is encouraged by all the arts of national profusion. But there has not been a more plentiful source of fable than the ignorance of the first ages in philosophy. From thence arise many of their astronomical fables and fanciful representations of the powers of nature; for curiosity leads men to inquire into the causes of extraordinary effects; and if the true explications are wanting, imaginary ones take their place. Each river and fountain is supposed to have a guardian deity; *ÆOLUS* is made ruler of the winds; *IRIS*, or the rainbow, is appointed messenger to the gods; the sun and moon are worshipped under the names of *APOLLO* and *CYNTHIA*, and eclipses are said to be owing to the loves of *ENDYMION* and *DIANA*. Thus, said he, there is nothing so absurd but the creating

power of a poet can command it. But surely one may account for their allegorizing all physical events, from the natural temper of mankind. These events of themselves being extraordinary, are a good foundation for a poetical fancy to work upon; and we are more pleased with a fable that conveys a significant meaning, than with one which engages our admiration without satisfying the understanding. In this manner the poets chuse to blend utility with entertainment, to amuse us with such stories as are raised upon instructive truths. And I believe we may consider it as a general clue to all the intricacies of mythology, that most of its fables are built, either on the actions of history, or the operations of nature; on the principles of civil policy, or the maxims of morality.

Our sophist was now interrupted by some other pupil; but as I went away from him, he told me he would be glad of my company once more in the Lyceum, for that the subject of fables was by no means exhausted.

From Athens.

C.

LETTER LXXX.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

A FEW days after my former visit to the Lyceum I returned thither, and at a distance saw CTESIPHON engaged in earnest conversation with one of his followers. As soon as he perceived me, he left his disciple, and ran up to meet me. I have just been instructing a young man, said he, in the beneficent nature of the gods and the first principles of justice. I found his mind corrupted with every popular prejudice, and unhappily immersed in all the wild extravagancies of fable. He was pleased, that his follies were patronized in the character of some ancient hero, and vindicated his own vices from the example of JUPITER. It is really incredible to observe, what early havoc superstition makes in the government and œconomy of human nature; and perhaps it might admit of some dispute, whether the disbelief of a Providence, or the absurd romances of superstition, have been most fatal to mankind. If the one disowns the existence of superior beings, the other confesses so many foolish and arbitrary tyrants: if the former gives a loose to the passions, the latter debases and enslaves the reason. Every day's experience convinces me of this truth; and I can no longer wonder at the ignorance and gross credulity of the first ages, when I meet with such

unaccountable instances of both in the days of knowledge and improvement. But let us apply more closely to our subject.

The last thing we took notice of the other day was, that the poets for the most part founded their fables, not only on some fact in history, or phenomenon in nature, but on the sentiments of civil policy and the maxims of morality. For my own part, I am so thoroughly persuaded of this, continued CTESTIPHON, that the notion can never be wrested from my mind by any plausibility of wit, or force of reasoning. When we are told, that, after the expulsion of the giants from heaven, Fame sprang from the earth as their youngest sister, can we apply it to any thing but to the seditious murmurs which usually succeed an insurrection? Or from the story of CASSANDRA do we not immediately collect the fruitlessness of untimely counsels? As she disdained to submit herself to the desires of APOLLO, the god of harmony, in like manner such advisers, too proud of their own wisdom and dexterity, disregard the occasions to speak and to be silent; the difference between vulgar and judicious ears, and the grace and gravity of discourse. Thus let their judgments be ever so profound, they fail of their purpose; and rather accelerate than prevent the ruin of their friends. — The thought, answered I, is ingenious; I may add, perhaps, refined: and to be plain with you, one cannot but observe, that if the priests and bards of antiquity intended by each of their fables to convey some exquisite

exquisite instruction to the minds of their scholars, they took a great deal of pains to express with obscurity, and in a large compass of words, what they might have delivered in fewer terms with more ease and perspicuity. Besides, you scarcely allow, that they ever invented a fable merely for the sake of giving play to the imagination. And so, according to your thoughts of the matter, we must suppose the necessitous and wandering *'Aoidoi* of antiquity intrusted with all the arcana of religion, acquainted with the arts of princes, and to have made themselves masters of the several mysteries of government. — The learning of the world at that time, replied CRESIPHON, lay in few hands; and the *'Aoidoi*, whom you speak of, had certainly the largest share of it. Their travels to the courts of petty lords (of whom there were many in those days) and to the towns which were then in highest repute through Greece, furnished them with a more considerable knowledge of the manners of various nations, and their opinions in religion and politics, than any other inhabitants of the country. HOMER, you know, is reported to have conversed with LYCURGUS; and they say, that, in forming the Spartan state, the severe lawgiver paid a peculiar deference to the sentiments of the fanciful poet. With respect to their tales, to me it seems more reasonable to imagine, that these *'Aoidoi* always conceal some subject of improvement under the mask of fable. It was the fashion of the

Ægyptians to utter themselves in parables and dark sayings. The Greeks have derived the same custom from their teachers; and you know it has been constantly looked upon as part of the wisdom of antiquity. But the invention of romance for the sake of romance, could only be an argument of folly. As to your objection to the use of allegory, I can in no sort admit it. A soul so aptly prepared for instruction as yours, CLEANDER, would chuse the nearest way to it. But how few are there, alas! who have the same disposition to receive it? A plain truth cannot offend you: were it moulded and softened to your inclination, you would think it an affront to your understanding; and you have no sooner marked out an error in your conduct, than you reform it. I beseech you not to judge of the rest of mankind by the temper of your own mind. Allegory is a proper and familiar way of bringing those to reason who cannot bear a downright reproof. It sweetens the bitter draught of instruction; it carries nothing that is austere or disgusting along with it; and the impression which it leaves, though gently and gradually made, is nevertheless lasting. Allegory is the varnish of truth; and while it takes away nothing from the strength of it, adds a gloss and beauty to it, agreeable to all, and inviting to many. I am convinced, said I, CTESIPHON, by your argument; and the encomium which you passed upon my temper in the course of it, is the only instance where

your judgment can be called in question. But I intreat you to go on.

Another source of mythology, added CRESIPHON, has been an ignorance in languages, especially the Phœnician; and this I am very well assured of, from my own knowledge of that tongue. It is natural to imagine, that the language of the colonies, which came from Phœnicia into Greece, would mix itself in process of time with the original language of the country; and as it abounds with equivocal words and phrases, whenever the Greeks met with them in the Phœnician histories, they thought themselves at liberty of explain them agreeably to their own humor. An example or two will suffice to maintain my observation. The word *Nahhasch* imports equally a keeper, or a dragon. Hence the tale of the golden fleece, and the garden of the Hesperides. From *Alpha* or *Ilpha*, signifying alike a bull or a ship, they framed the story of EUROPA's being carried off by JUPITER transformed into a bull, instead of saying, more consistently with the accidents of common life, that she was conveyed in a ship to Crete. By the assistance of languages one may trace the origin of those Ægyptian and Phœnician fables, that have been deformed and varied by the Greeks, with a view to prove, that the rise of all was among them, and that they received neither their deities nor great men from any other people. This arises from their national pride, in pretending to be *Αὐτόχθονες*, or *Aborigines*, of the country.

The tale of EUROPA, which you just mentioned, answered I, puts me in mind of another

source of fable, ridiculous perhaps and whimsical, but not yet touched upon; I mean a regard for the reputation of several matrons and princeffes of antiquity. As it was impossible their chastity should ever be violated by human means, or the allurements of the fairest mortals, some god must have forced them to a compliance with his wishes; and thus the soft gallantries of the lover were imputed to the arbitrary injunctions of a deity.

After all, concluded the sophist, we must look for the chief cause of fable in vanity, the prevailing foible of mankind. Our ancestors, unable to follow plain nature, absurdly endeavoured to exceed it. For designing to raise their own characters to fame, or propose their own lives as the patterns for imitation, they described them with all the marvels of poetry and fancy. Strange fondness for fiction! that could make them aspire to a reputation of extravagance, unjustly called heroism, and set themselves for an example in such actions as are above the capacity of a man. How different is the behaviour of unaffected virtue! She disdains the gay ornaments of fiction, and borrows no lustre but from her own intrinsic excellence. Her views are not like those of the romantically ambitious, dependent on false glory, and the blast of popular applause. She teaches us to recommend our actions to the esteem and admiration of posterity, unmixed with such fantastic falsehoods, as may be thought justly an allay to their merit.

C.

LETTER LXXXI.

CLEANDER to MEGABYZUS. *From Athens.*

THY five thousand darics ⁹⁸, noble satrap, are so far from creating me a disagreeable employment, that they give me occasion to improve and indulge my taste among those curiosities which thou desiredst me to procure, and at the same time are of service to me in my ministerial capacity, by introducing me to the acquaintance of many considerable persons, and advancing me to a character which the greatest men here are fond of, that of a lover and judge of those elegancies. Were my fellow-laborer CRATIPPUS to undertake such a commission, he would at once lose all the interest his singular address has procured him in the Lacedæmonian administration; nay, it were well if he did not get himself expelled from that little community, where he daily sups black broth for his master's service, and outdoes the native Spartans in bitterness against the Athenian politeness and Asiatic magnificence. But here whatever tends to improve or adorn life, has its share of reputation. The pencil of my countryman PARRHASIUS has

⁹⁸ See Letter xxx.

obtained for him the right of citizenship; and PHIDIAS's skill in statuary and architecture raised him so high in the state, that he was treated like a public minister, and impeached before the people. But thou wilt not wonder at any marks of distinction shown to artists in this city, after thy adventure with ZEUXIS at Ephesus, if thou recoldest with how stately an air he received thy visit, and, amidst all the pomp and attendance of a Persian viceroy, how freely he reproved thy false criticisms on his works⁹⁹. To those very reproofs is perhaps in some measure owing the admirable taste thou now art master of; and which, joined to that liberality, which equally distinguishes thee, will establish a school of elegance in the East, and convert our affectation of the costly and unnatural into a love of what is great and simple. My situation enables me to assist this noble design; and it is with the greatest pleasure I give thee a proof of my attention to it, by the following list of what I have collected.

The two figures of Delian brass are of POLYCLETUS¹⁰⁰. In one he shows all the soft beauties of a delicate youth; in the other, the manly grace and strong muscling of a body trained to arms. Thou wilt be apt in the latter to charge the sculptor with extravagance;

⁹⁹ The common story of ALEXANDER and APOLLO is by AELIAN. Var. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2. told of MEGABYZUS and ZEUXIS.

¹⁰⁰ POLYCLETUS DIABUMENUM fecit molliter juvenem & DORYPHORUM viriliter puerum. PLIN. xxxiv. § 19.

but the exercises constantly practised in Greece, give a shape to parts, very different from that of the less active nations.

Most of the *HERMÆ*¹⁰¹, thou wilt observe, have the same turn of countenance. That divine sweetness is not the mere idea of the artist; the hint is taken from *ALCIBIADES*¹⁰², the most beautiful youth in Athens. The *CUPID* holding a thunderbolt, which is also his portrait, I cannot but look upon as something prophetic, as a kind of expression of that reputation and authority which his charming person and most engaging behaviour are likely one day to procure him among his citizens.

It was with difficulty I got the sea-piece of *ANDROBIUS*¹⁰³ from the family whose ancestor is the hero of it. The intrepidity and eagerness which appear in the face and action of *SCYLLIS*, as he swims towards the Persian galleys, whose cables he cut in the bad weather before the battle of Artemisium, are wonderfully expressed. Great minister, let not the subject offend thee; we love not our country the less, when we admire the virtue of an enemy; and a work of art like this sent into Asia, whatever be the story, I consider among the spoils of Greece.

¹⁰¹ Athenienses illos *Hermas* *ALCIBIADIS* ad corporis similitudinem fabricatos. *ARNOB.* adversus gentes, lib. vi.

¹⁰² De cupidine fulmen tenente id affirmatur, *ALCIBIADEM* esse principem formâ in ea ætate. *PLIN.* lib. xxxvi. § 4.

¹⁰³ *ANDROBIUS* pinxit *SCYLLIN* ancoras Persicæ classis præcidentem. *PLIN.* lib. xxxv. § 40.

The victory of our troops over the Ægyptian rebels ¹⁰⁴ is, however, a more agreeable piece. The painter, to show it happened upon the Nile, has introduced a crocodile seizing an ass upon the bank, and enriched the landscape with a Sphinx and a Pyramid.

Every master, thou wilt imagine, was ambitious to succeed in the representation of PERICLES ¹⁰⁵. To help the want of proportion in his head, and yet not quite lose so striking a particularity, they generally covered it with an helmet. He was otherwise a most graceful figure; and CTESILAUS ¹⁰⁶ has done him that justice, that in this statue every spectator agrees he is truly Olympian. The ruler of Athens, the arbiter of Greece, the orator, the general, the statesman, all appear in his look and attitude. CTESILAUS indeed has the peculiar art of improving every charm, and adding dignity to the noblest subjects.

After surveying this elegant portrait, what wilt thou think of the same great person, exposed in the ridiculous draughts of a painter in CLEON's pay, his only deformity aggravated, and every feature debased? Through all this

¹⁰⁴ Cum prælum navale Aegyptiorum & Persarum pinxisset, quod in Nilo, cujus aqua est mari similis, factum volebat intelligi, argumento declaravit, quod arte non poterat; asellum enim in littore bibentem pinxit & crocodilum insidiantem ei. PLIN. *ibid.* So N. Poussin showed, that his scene lay in Aegypt.

¹⁰⁵ PLUTARCH in PERICLE.

¹⁰⁶ CTESILAUS. — Olympium PERICLEM dignum cognomine. Mirumque in hac arte est, quod nobiles viros nobiliores fecit. PLIN. *lib. xxxiv. § 19.*

thou wilt still perceive a shocking likeness; and the painter seems as happily to have copied the abusive description of the comic poet CRATINUS ¹⁰⁷, as PHIDIAS did those sublime verses ¹⁰⁸ of HOMER in the design of his JUPITER. Such is the licence of the pencil at Athens. But it goes higher, and burlesques even their gods in the story of the birth of BACCHUS, where JUPITER appears in the dress and posture of a woman in labor, with the goddesses, like gossips, standing round him. The enlightened adorers of MITHRAS, potent satrap, may safely join in the laugh at such monstrous representations. To express the deity under any form, we know to be absurd and impious; but at the same time we must allow, that to this superstition of the Greeks the arts of design owe their perfection and their very being. The rude image of some god was the first effort of sculpture, and the most curious paintings adorn the walls of the temples.

The encomiums of the poets have made MYRON'S ¹⁰⁹ cow so famous, that I was determined to procure it for thee. It is indeed a capital piece. The brass, thou wilt see, is of a different kind from that employed by

¹⁰⁷ The verses are quoted by PLUTARCH in PERICLE.

¹⁰⁸ *Petulanti pictura innotuit, Jove Liberum parturiente depicto mitrato, & muliebriter ingemisciente inter obstetricia dearum.* PLIN. lib. xxxv. § 40.

¹⁰⁹ MYRONEM — *bucula maximè nobilitavit, celebratis versibus laudata.* PLIN. lib. xxxiv. § 19.

POLYCLETUS ¹¹⁰; it comes from the forges of Ægina. These two rivals vie even in the choice of their materials.

The lion surrounded by Cupids, by the same hand, strikes me much more. Wouldst thou think it possible for that nobleness of character, which distinguishes the gods and heroes of **PHIDIAS** ¹¹¹, to be displayed in the brute creation? **MYRON**'s lion will convince thee of it. The boys are designed with such softness ¹¹², and placed so advantageously, (some tying garlands round his neck, some playing with his paws, or climbing up his sides,) that no group, however superior on account of its subject, has been more admired.

The genius of Athens is the work of **PARRHASIUS** ¹¹³. By the expression he has given to his figure, and the attributes with which he accompanies it, he most ingeniously shows us the temper and state of this people. There is an air of grandeur mixed with levity, and a

¹¹⁰ Aeginetico ære **MYRON** usus est, Deliaco **POLYCLETUS**, æquales atque condiscipuli: æmulatio iis & in materia fuit. **PLIN.** lib. xxxiv. § 5.

¹¹¹ Like the famous lion of **RUBENS**.

¹¹² *Leæna, aligerique ludentes cum eâ Cupidines; quorum alii religatam tenerent, alii e cornu cogerent bibere, alii calcearent foccis.* **PLIN.** lib. xxxvi. § 4. The boys like **FIAMINGO**'s.

¹¹³ Pinxit **PARRHASIUS** *Δῆμον* Atheniensium, argumento quoque ingenioso; volebat namque varium, iracundum, injustum, inconstantem, eundem exorabilem, clementem, misericordem, excelsum, gloriosum, humilem, ferocem, fugacemque & omnia pariter ostendere. **PLIN.** lib. xxxv. § 36.

fierceness tempered by generosity. The owl represents political prudence, the caduceus eloquence, and the trident the dominion of the sea. In general, I must confess, these allegorical subjects seldom please me. It is difficult to find symbols that exactly represent the idea they are intended for; and, if they are not such as are authorized by common use, they perplex and tire the spectator, instead of entertaining and informing him.

I will not interrupt the pleasure, which I flatter myself thou wilt receive from this account, with business of state. My public dispatches I have addressed to the chief scribe. I would speak to thee on this occasion, not as the lowest slave of ARTAXERXES to the great support of his throne, but as a passionate lover of the arts to the generous protector of them.

W.

End of the fourth Year of the Peloponnesian War.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

